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## Joe Dodger, the Boy Ventriloquist.

By GUS WILLIAMS.



The shrieking of the monkey aroused Joe from his stupor. He sprang to his feet, he saw that Fay was saved, but that her tante preserver was in deadly peril. He rushed upon the reptile with his bowie-knife drawn.

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# JOE DODGER,

## THE BOY VENTRILOQUIST.

By GUS WILLIAMS,

Author of "The Black Mask," "Billy Bender," "The Seven Charmed Bullets," "An Actor's Son," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER I.

A MYSTERY WHICH ASTONISHES THE SCHOOL-MASTER AND CREATES A RUMPUS.

"Boys, come to order!" cried Professor Thwackem, hammering away at his desk with his ferule. "Come to order immediately!"

The scene was the Yankville High School, an institution that was the pride of all the good citizens of Yankville, a quiet, staid, and sober New England town, and those whom the professor addressed as boys constituted the highest class, who were soon to graduate.

They were lads ranging in age from fifteen to eighteen. The usual crowd of noisy, boisterous, whole-souled and hearty boys, that are to be met with everywhere, and without entering into a minute description of each, it is sufficient to state that our hero, Joe Dodger, was one of the number.

He was about sixteen years of age, tall, muscular, and well-built, with fair complexion, a shock of auburn hair, deep-blue eyes, that were generally sparkling with mischief; the leader at once in intellect and physical qualities in the class.

On this morning the boys were more than unusually boisterous. The occasion being that, as they were to leave school for good within a few weeks, they had determined to have a grand old time, and were busily engaged in discussing the various features of the proposed "blow-out," when the professor entered, and, enthroning himself upon the cathedra, rapped for order.

A single word about the professor before we take up the thread of our story.

Ebenezer Thwackem, D.D. LL.D., was the type of the New England school-master. Long, thin and bony, his legs and arms entirely disproportionate in length with the shortness of his body, with bent shoulders and consumptive air, his clean-shaven face, hooked nose and protruding cheek-bone, the straggling tufts of gray hair, his threadbare black suit in several places, through sitting, shining like a mirror, his scowling countenance and nervous, jerky manner—all impressed upon him the stamp of a kind of instructor, which, happily for themselves and those in their charge, is fast passing away.

"Goodness gracious!" cried the professor, finding that his efforts were in vain. "What's got into you this morning?"

"Gin and milk," came the unexpected answer, apparently from a boy known for his quiet manner and exemplary conduct.

The boys set up a shout of laughter, and then all gazed in amazement at the unheard-of audacity of the seeming culprit.

The professor was dumbfounded.

He could not believe his senses.

Such an act had never occurred within the school to his recollection, and from his best boy, too.

"Hayward," cried he impatiently, "step forward, sir!"

The boy so addressed advanced.

His face bore a puzzled look.

"Now, sir," shouted the professor, "tell us what you mean by such language."

"I never opened my lips, sir," answered Hayward earnestly.

"You know you lie," said some one immediately behind him.

Hayward turned around as if shot, and glanced at those who sat behind him, but they looked at each other with surprise and wonderment depicted on their countenances.

The professor bounced out of his seat like a ball shot from a cannon.

"Why, this is infamous," yelled he, "perfectly

infamous! Who was it that used that slang phrase? I am determined to discover the wretch, and woe to him if I do!"

This new offense made him, for the time, oblivious of the first interruption, and he sent Hayward to his seat.

"Now, sir," said he sternly, addressing the boy from whom the sound apparently proceeded, "was that you?"

The boy protested his innocence, and so did the rest, and all that were in the immediate vicinity of the cause of the disturbance.

The professor was in a rage at his failure to discover the perpetrator.

"Who was it?" asked he in despair. "Does any one know?"

"I do," answered one, though the professor could not discover who.

"Well?" asked he.

"Solomon Slingshot, the button-grinder."

This answer was too much for the equanimity of the boys.

They roared and yelled, they shrieked and screamed like so many lunatics just let out of Bedlam.

For some moments chaos reigned in that school-room, and the professor stood there with ferule upraised, dumb, powerless, rooted to the spot, with a horrible grin spread over his face,

"Like Patience on a monument, smiling at grief."

A silence as of the grave succeeded this wild outburst.

The boys suddenly became mute and silent.

There was some mystery in this they could not explain, but which caused their merriment to vanish.

They gazed at each other with questioning wonder, but none seemed able to solve this riddle.

Silence being thus restored the professor folded his arms, and turning upon them a look of awful dignity, thus addressed him:

"Boys, you are struck dumb with shame at your proceedings this morning. It is absolutely unparalleled in the annals of this school-house. You are soon to graduate, you are soon to enter the wide world, and when you become older and wiser, the thought of this day's behavior will fill your hearts with sorrow and shame. There are some among you who think that, because your stay here is soon to be over, that for that reason you can commit an outrage upon the high reputation this school enjoys, and upon me, its principal. But whoever they are, let me tell them that they will find themselves mistaken. They shall not graduate, they shall be expelled in dishonor and infamy, and none of you shall leave this room until the guilty ones are discovered."

This speech had the effect of sobering the boys, and as there was no more mysterious interruptions the professor continued:

"Now that you are silent and attentive I will tell you what I intended to say half an hour ago. You know that, though this is a private school, yet it is subject to the inspection and examination of the gentlemen comprising the State Board Examiners. I have received information that they will visit the school this day and examine you. In fact, I momentarily expect their coming. While they are present I hope that you young gentlemen of the graduating class will, by your general behavior and ready answers, sustain and increase the reputation of the Yankville High School, for high discipline and sound instruction."

He had hardly delivered himself of this speech when a knock at the door announced the arrival of the examiners.

The boys straightened themselves up and sat erect in silent expectation.

The professor opened the door, and with a greasy smile upon his lips and an humble obeisance, ushered into the school-room four stout, dignified gentlemen, arrayed in all the glory of black swallow-tails, and high-standing collars.

"Ah! gentlemen," exclaimed the professor, shaking their hands, "it does me much honor for you to witness my humble efforts in the paths of learning."

"Professor Thwackem," answered the Honorable Eliphalet Todd, the chairman of the board, and the most dignified of the lot, "the honor is mutual. Your school, sir, is an ornament and pride to the State, and its greatest virtue is discipline. Heaven's first law is order, and it should also be the first law in the school-room. What is a school without discipline?"

"I give it up, Toddy," answered some one, in irreverent tones.

Toddy! The Honorable Eliphalet Todd, chairman of the State Board of School Examiners, and two hundred pounds in weight, addressed as Toddy! and that, too, by one of the boys before whom he had discoursed on discipline.

He could scarcely believe he had heard aright.

He gazed at the boys with a look of severe indignation.

Not a face moved, not a muscle stirred.

Whatever inclination they had to laugh was restrained by the mysterious source whence the exclamation had proceeded, and the august presence of the board.

The Honorable Mr. Todd next gazed at the school-master.

He was blushing with mortification and shame.

He dared not raise his eyes from the ground to meet those of the chairman.

The rest of the board exchanged curious glances.

Was this an example of the discipline their colleague had just now so highly lauded?

"Sir," said the chairman, slightly stammering, and turning towards the crest-fallen professor, "did you—did you address me by the name of—of Toddy?"

"I—I," stammered the professor in turn, and throwing daggers at the class—"I hardly understood you, sir; I—heard nothing."

"I must have been mistaken," said the chairman, accepting the only plausible solution which presented itself to his mind. "I will examine the boys in geography. The boy on the back seat, there, will arise. Now, sir, tell me what is the capital of France?"

"Paris," came in a whisper close to the boy's side.

"Sit down, sir," exclaimed the chairman, sternly. "You are being prompted. Professor, I am surprised that you should allow such a thing to occur."

The hapless school-master was in despair.

No one had been more strict in that regard than he, and now that such a thing should happen in the presence of the board was wormwood to his soul.

Oh how he longed to wallop the whole class.

"The next boy will arise," continued the chairman, in a somewhat ruffled tone. "Now, sir, step out in the aisle, so that no one can prompt you. Tell me, sir, who was the greatest general among the Romans?"

"Ben Butler," apparently answered the boy.

Human nature could not stand that.

The whole class fairly roared with laughter.

"Oh, this is shameful," cried the chairman. "Professor Thwackem, I shall report the school as in a wretched condition. This examination

must stop right here. Look to your license, sir, it will be revoked. Come, gentlemen," added he, turning to the board, "we will delay no longer."

"Squeak, squeak," came the sound of a pig right under the chairman's feet.

That worthy person sprang into the air with a bound.

He struck the professor's desk, which rolled over him, throwing him to the floor.

In falling he grappled with the entire board, and they toppled along with him, drawing the school-master after them.

There they lay on the ground, a heap of groaning flesh, to the infinite delight of the yelling class.

## CHAPTER II.

### JOE AND HIS UNCLE.

"Boys," cried our hero, starting up just as the worthies tumbled on the floor, "let's rush out. Hurrah for the campus. Follow me."

The effect of his words was electric. The boys seized their caps and with wild warhoop of the untutored savage, ran from the room and out into their play-ground.

A crowd gathered around Joe as he perched himself on the head of an empty barrel, and gave vent to immoderate laughter.

"I say, boys," cried he, "wasn't it glorious? How old Thwackem did jump! And how the old dodgers took a tumble!"

"Ay, ay," cried several in a chorus.

"What strikes me," exclaimed Hayward, "is who the deuce raised all the row?"

"Can't you guess?" asked Joe, with a curious twinkle in his eye.

"It wasn't you, was it?" shouted half a dozen of the boys.

"I was doing it all the time," answered he, complacently.

"Why," exclaimed the boy who sat next to him in the school-room, "I didn't see your lips move."

"Neither they did," replied he; "nevertheless, I created all the fuss. You won't let out, boys, if I tell you?"

"No, no, we won't," they all shouted.

"Is sneaking Bob amongst you?" asked Joe, gazing around.

"The duffer's not here," answered they.

Sneaking Bob was the nick-name given by the boys to one of their number who ingratiated himself with the master by revealing all the peccadilloes and pranks that his companions indulged in, and was consequently heartily hated and despised by all the boys.

"Well, boys," said Joe, "seeing there's no one here who'll give me away, I'll tell you all about it. You remember, boys, about six months ago an Italian duffer came into the town and gave an entertainment in which he spoke with his stomach so that he could send his voice wherever he wished to; he was a ventriloquist. Well, you remember he said that some fellows are born with a natural gift that way, and if they practice they can become ventriloquists. Well, that sort of struck me, and so I tried whether I mightn't be such a chap. In a word, boys, I found out that I was a ventriloquist. I wouldn't tell anybody until I had become perfect in it. So I kept it a secret and practiced every day. Now I can talk that way as good as any one, and I tried it openly to-day in school for the first time."

This revelation was received by the boys with a shout of delight. The possession of that faculty by their leader promised them a mine of fun, and they besought our hero to give them some further demonstration of his power. This he willingly did, and the boys were transported with glee at the success of his efforts.

"Well, boys," exclaimed Joe, after he had concluded, "let's go into the meadows and have a game of foot-ball. Old Thwackem won't miss us much to-day, I reckon."

His word was law, and in a few minutes all the boys had left the school-yard, and were noisily engaged at their new sport.

They had hardly disappeared when the panel upon which our hero had been sitting was raised and Sneaking Bob crept out.

He stretched his form, which was cramped by the uncomfortable position he had occupied while eavesdropping, and a malicious grin overspread his cunning face.

"Ah, ah, Joe Dodger," exclaimed he, shaking his clenched hand at his absent enemy. "I'll be even with you now for the walloping you gave me the other day."

Bending low so that the boys should not see him he sneaked into the school-house and entered the professor's private office, where that gentleman, with tears in his eyes, was humbly beseeching the pardon of the august board of examiners, and in a whining tone relating the

strange experiences he had gone through that morning.

"But all this is inexplicable," exclaimed the Honorable Mr. Todd. "How are you to discover the guilty ones?"

"There was only one, sir," said Sneaking Bob, who had entered unperceived and who now came forward. "And I know who he is!"

"Ah, Bob," exclaimed the professor, patting the informer's head, "I knew you'd find out. Tell us who was it and I'll work you perfect in your lessons to-morrow."

This pleased the young scamp for he was too lazy to study, and yet did not like to be always at the foot of the class.

"It was Joe Dodger," answered he, grinning.

"Joe Dodger!" exclaimed the professor, in surprise, "Joe Dodger, the boy whom I teach for nothing, just because his miserly uncle holds a mortgage on the school. Oh, the rascal shall suffer for this! But how did you find out?"

The sneak related all he had heard.

The school-master chuckled with satisfaction.

"I'll tell his uncle, Job Thornton. He hates the boy, and will fix him for this."

Even as he spoke there came a knock at the door, and in answer to the professor's call, Job Thornton, our hero's uncle, entered the room.

He was a decrepit, weazen-faced, pinched-looking old man. Meager in form as though he begrudged himself a meal, with his old and tattered garments loosely hanging to his almost fleshless bones, with the cunning, crafty look in his eyes, his cringing manner, he looked the very picture of what he was—a heartless, mean, and God-forsaken miser.

"Good-morning, professor," whined he, as he entered, "good-morning, gentlemen. I come to see you about the interest on my mortgage. I've been calculating that Joe's got sufficient education, and that he ought to be put to work, and you ought to pay me my interest hereafter in cash."

"That I will," answered the professor, "and Joe Dodger shan't stay in my school another day."

"What?" asked the amiable uncle; "has he again been cutting up his usual pranks? Oh, that boy will be the very death of me yet. I must take him down a peg."

The school-master related what a row our hero had created, and during the recital the old miser's eyes fairly sparkled with malicious rage.

"Oh, just leave him to me," hissed he, grinding his teeth, "just leave him to me. I'll drive this spirit out of him. Oh, let him come home to-night. I'll show him how to act towards his teacher."

The conversation was continued for some time longer and then Job Thornton took his departure.

Meanwhile the boys were enjoying themselves in various ways until the school-master, by the ringing of the bell, recalled them into the school-room.

"Boys," said he, "the board of examiners have gone, and it is needless for me to tell you that they were highly displeased with your conduct to-day. I had intended to keep you here until the offenders should be discovered, but to-day's events have made me feel quite ill, and I will, therefore, dismiss you for the day. To-morrow I will investigate matters further. You may now go home."

That the boys did not want to be told this a second time was evident. They separated for their respective homes in high glee at the glorious old time they had had and resting in fancied security that the school-master had not discovered the truth.

Joe entered the wretched broken-down cottage of his uncle, which had been his home almost as far back as he could remember.

It is true that sometimes in his day-dreams he fancied himself in a former house, more handsomely furnished, and surrounded by all the elegancies and comforts of wealth. At such times he would behold the features of a tall handsome man, a lovely woman, kind words would greet his ear and kisses of love and affection be pressed to his lips.

From such a happy vision he would awaken and find it all a dream. If he had ever lived in such a house it must have been many, many years ago; that handsome man must have been his father, that lovely woman his mother. Where were they now? His uncle had told him that they were dead? But that was all he ever knew of his parentage.

With a sigh he entered the dim hallway. He was met by the housekeeper, the only help his miserly uncle allowed himself, and the good woman endured many privations rather than tear herself away from the boy she so fondly loved.

"Joe," said she, and her voice slightly trembled, "your uncle told me to send you to his room as soon as you came into the house."

"Why, Mary," asked our hero, in surprise, "how agitated you are? What's the matter?"

"He seems to be awfully mad against you about something," answered she.

"Oh, he's in one of his delightful humors," answered Joe, laughingly. "I'm used to that."

"Take care of yourself, Joe," whispered she. "Don't provoke him further. I would die were anything to happen to you."

"I'll look out for myself," answered he cheerily as he sought his uncle's room.

"So, you young rascal," was his uncle's greeting, "you've been kicking up your usual row at school to-day."

"I, sir?" asked our hero, wondering how his uncle became informed of what had occurred.

"Dare you deny it, sir, I know all about it."

"Oh well, if you do, I suppose I must confess it."

"You glory in your shame, do you?" cried his uncle enraged at our hero's cool demeanor. "But I'll put a stop to it. You shan't go to school any more. You shan't eat my bread in idleness. I have apprenticed you to a trade, sir, where you will continue until you are twenty-one years of age."

This was news indeed to Joe, but he merely asked:

"May I know what trade?"

"A shoemaker, sir," answered his uncle vindictively. "You're fit for nothing else but a cobbler."

"I won't learn any such trade," answered our hero, highly indignant.

"Oh you won't, eh," yelled his uncle. "I'd like to know what you've got to say about it?"

"I guess," answered Joe, restraining his passion, "my inclination has something to do with the choice of my profession. At any rate I'll never become a cobbler."

The words were scarcely out of his lips when his uncle sprang upon him and seized him by the throat.

"You beggar, you," shrieked he, "I'll strangle you!"

Joe knew that, boy as he was, he was more than a match for his decrepit old assailant; but he, although attacked, desired to offer no violence to one who was his uncle. So he had recourse to his ventriloquous art. Assuming a deep bass voice and sending the sound towards the ceiling of the room, he exclaimed:

"Brother, touch not my son."

The effect upon his uncle was awful. The old man loosened his hold upon our hero's throat, his face turned an ashy pale, a groan escaped his lips, and he fell senseless to the floor.

## CHAPTER III.

### JOE STARTS OUT INTO THE WORLD.

JOE was himself somewhat startled by the effect of his words on his uncle. It is true that the latter had only fainted, but why should he swoon at apparently hearing his brother's voice? There was some mystery about that which our hero could not comprehend, but which he firmly determined to fathom. As he had become older, by degrees he had more and more felt the want of loving parents to cheer and sustain him. He was not at all satisfied with the vague explanations of his uncle concerning their absence. If they were dead how had they died, where were they buried, did any stone mark their last resting-place?

All these questions, raised by the boy's yearning soul, remained unanswered, and he was bound to discover the truth at whatever cost.

For the present, however, he satisfied himself by rubbing the swooned man's face and hands, pouring cold water on his head, and by other means restoring him to consciousness.

In this he was successful, and as he saw his uncle exhibit signs of returning life, he left the room in order to prevent another outburst.

Joe Thornton slowly arose from the ground, and with chattering teeth and trembling limbs, peered furtively around the room. He evidently expected to cast his eyes upon some one, and gave a sigh of relief when he saw that he was alone.

"Not here," hissed he, "not here. I thought I heard his voice. I'm sure I heard him call me brother. And yet how could he be here. He could not have escaped. No, no, that's impossible."

He seemed absorbed in his thoughts. At last the situation seemed to strike his mind, for he uttered a yell of mingled rage and hate.

"Ah, I have it!" cried he. "Thwackem told me Joe was a ventriloquist. I see it all, it was he who uttered the words that frightened me so. That puts the climax on it. He suspects me, and like the young devil he is, will get at the bottom of the secret. Have I lived so long, have I committed so many crimes, to have a boy triumph

over me? Shall he rob me of the wealth I reared from his father's pittance? Shall he hand me over to the law? No, no, a thousand times no! I'll kill him first."

He paced up and down the room in great excitement. He breathed heavily, and cold perspiration stood on his forehead.

"Ay," muttered he, "this very night I'll murder him, and then the gold is mine, the gold is mine."

When Joe left his uncle's room he went to the kitchen where Mary had spread for him a substantial if not sumptuous dinner, which he devoured with that healthy appetite which is a prerogative of youth only.

"Now, Mary," said he, after she had cleared the table, "I want you to tell me about my parents. Whenever I have heretofore asked you, you, for some reason or other, put me off; but something has occurred to-day which makes me determined to wait in ignorance no longer."

He related the scene between himself and his uncle, and continued:

"You told me that you were housekeeper in my parents' home before you came here, and I know you can tell me a great deal if you wish to."

"Ah! Joe," answered the worthy woman, brushing a tear from her eye. "It is a sad story, and I have kept it from you because I did not want to fill your young heart with sorrow; but now, as you are soon to become a man, it is proper for you to know all."

"Before you begin, Mary," interrupted Joe, "I want you to tell me how it happens that my uncle, who is my father's brother, bears the name of Thornton, while my name is Joe Dodger."

"You were a great favorite with your poor father," answered she, "and he nicknamed you thus on account of the capers you cut even when a mere babe, and it has stuck to you since. Your right name is Joe Thornton, but we've got in the habit of calling you Joe Dodger."

It may be here remarked that we shall continue to call our hero by the name that seems adapted to his general character.

"Your mother," continued Mary, "was a French lady whom your father married while at Paris. He loved her devotedly, and when twin sons were born to him the measure of his happiness seemed complete."

"Twin sons," ejaculated Joe. "Had I a brother then?"

"You had. His name was Henry, and though your brother, he was as unlike in appearance to you as day is to night. He took after your mother, who was a beautiful brunette, with dark flashing eyes and wavy black hair, while you resemble your father, who was light complexioned. Well, until six years after their marriage there never lived a happier couple. Your father was very wealthy; they lived in a brown-stone house in New York. When you and your brother were about five years old, for some unknown cause, a violent quarrel arose between your parents. Your mother was of a very passionate temper, and the result was a separation. She took Henry with her and embarked on the first steamer that left New York for her native land. A week after, the terrible tidings came that the vessel had sunk at sea, during a storm, and that all on board were drowned."

"Poor mother, poor brother," murmured Joe, with tears in his eyes.

"The sad news," continued she, "struck a fearful blow to your father, for he still dearly loved his wife and child. He would remain in New York no longer. With you, his only loved one left to him and me he came to this place and sought to bury himself from all the world in your uncle's house. He became very sad and melancholy. He had been here about three months when one day he and your uncle, accompanied by two stalwart men, strangers to the place, drove off in a carriage. A couple of days later your uncle returned alone."

"Mary," cried Joe, springing up and gazing keenly at her, "do you believe that my father is dead?"

"Hush," whispered she, glancing around the room. "I dare not tell you what I believe."

"He was wealthy, I but a child, my uncle a sordid miser. Mary, could it be, could my uncle have murdered his brother to obtain his wealth?"

"I do not know, I cannot tell," whispered she. "Perhaps he has hid himself somewhere."

"Oh, if I could but hope that," cried our hero fervently. "If I could but believe that he is still alive, I would ransack every quarter of the globe to discover him and restore him to his rights."

It was midnight. On a simple couch in the sparsely furnished attic lay Joe. He was calmly, peacefully, sleeping, and the full moon that shed its silvery beams through the single window shed a halo of glory around his fair head.

Slowly and stealthily the door opened. A female form entered the room. It was Mary.

She was as pale as a ghost, and trembled with excitement.

She advanced on tiptoe to the bed, whereon lay sleeping the boy so dear to her heart.

"Hist," whispered she, shaking him, "hist, Joe, for mercy's sake wake up."

The boy did not stir; his sleep was too profound.

"Oh Heaven help me," cried she, "that I may not be too late."

She shook him more violently and finally aroused him from his slumber.

"Quick Joe," exclaimed she, "get up and dress yourself."

"Why, Mary," ejaculated he, in surprise, "what do you want?"

"Get up and flee."

"Why?" asked he, arising in his bed.

"Your uncle," gasped she agitatedly. "I heard him mutter as I passed his room, 'now it is the time.' I peered through the keyhole, he was whetting a huge knife, he intends to murder you."

"To murder me," cried Joe, springing to the floor. It took him hardly a second to dress.

"Let him come," added he bravely. "I am ready to meet him."

"No, no, Joe," pleaded she, "seek your safety in flight."

"And leave you here alone?" answered he.

"He will not harm me. There, that's a good boy. Out of that window, climb down the honeysuckle. Go, and Heaven guard you."

Thus importuned, Joe crept out of the window. Hardly had he disappeared when the door opened and Job Thornton entered, bearing a murderous-looking knife in his hand.

The sight of Mary showed him that his victim had escaped.

"Perdition!" cried he, "where is Joe?"

"Safe," answered Mary, triumphantly. "Safe from your clutches, murderer!"

"Ah!" shouted he, "you have warned him, you have aided him to escape; you shall pay the penalty."

He sprang upon her, and seizing her by the throat, brandished the weapon over her head.

The poor woman thought her last moment had come.

"Catch the murderer," "bind the villain," "arrest him," apparently shouted a dozen different persons.

Job Thornton let go his hold upon his victim.

"The devil!" cried he. "I'm discovered."

He rushed from the room.

Our hero sprang through the window into the room and embraced Mary.

He had uttered the various cries that had frightened off the villain. His knowledge of ventriloquism had enabled him to save the house-keeper's life.

## CHAPTER IV.

### JOE GOES TO SEA.

Joe now recognized that his only chance of safety was in flight. He knew that his uncle would not repeat the attempt upon Mary's life, for that was but the momentary ebullition of temper, and there was no motive for her death, but he felt that the old villain would, if he had the opportunity, kill them both, through fear that our hero would penetrate the mystery surrounding his father's disappearance, and in order to remain in possession of the ill-gotten wealth which belonged to Joe.

He had hastily made up a small bundle of necessary clothing, which he had slung over his back.

For an instant he hesitated which direction to take. The whole world was before him. He determined to adopt a jolly roving life, hastening from one place to another, as the best means to come across the place where his father was hidden. He felt convinced that the progenitor of his existence was still an inhabitant of this earth, and youth and daring inspired him with the hope that he would be able to find him.

For the immediate present, however, Joe felt that he must find a place where he could earn enough to support him, and his mind instantly reverted to the glorious tales of sailors' lives which he had read. A seaport was but a few miles from his native village, and towards it he directed his footsteps.

He walked sturdily along, and daybreak found him wandering along the wharf, somewhat tired, very dusty, and awfully hungry.

He wanted to get some breakfast, but then it struck him that he had not a penny in his pocket. Under the circumstances, he was not much to blame for resolving to make his art of ventriloquism procure him one.

He entered a grim, smoky, dirty-looking restaurant, which was situated in a street along the water-front, and going up to the bar, asked the jolly, stout proprietor standing behind it for a glass of water. This was handed to him, and he remained standing there under pretense of drinking it.

A party of men were standing at the bar drinking and talking. One of them, a sailor, returned from a voyage, was showing a handful of money and blowing and swaggering. This man Joe hit upon as his victim. Having got the hang of his voice, he made him say:

"Boys, call for what you want, I stand treat for all in the house."

Immediately there was a mighty rush of bummers to the bar. Our hero sat down at the table and ordered a porter-house steak, potatoes and coffee. The waiter quickly brought them, and Joe fell to with a will and demolished the eatables in an extraordinary short time.

Meanwhile the victim was dumb with astonishment; he had heard himself give the order, the words had issued from his lips, and yet he had not uttered them. Before he could recover sufficiently to countermand the order the mischief had been done, and the jolly proprietor said:

"You're a brick, Jack. The bill is ten dollars, and I likes a man as is generous like you."

"Generosity be darned," roared Jack. "I didn't stand treat, and I shan't pay a cent."

"You didn't treat?" cried the landlord, indignantly. "Why, I leaves it to the gentlemen here if yer didn't tell the boys to call for whatever they wanted."

"Yes, yes," cried the bummers in concert. "We all heard it."

"I knows it," said Jack, solemnly. "I heard it myself; but, mates, may I never live to tread the deck agin if a single word came from me. I'm bewitched, and the devil put words in my mouth."

"Come, come," cried the landlord, fearful of losing his money, "that's too thin. Fork over, and don't yer make any more fuss about it."

"Darn me if I will," cried Jack, bitterly. "I'd like to see the man that can make me do it. I tell ye's I didn't stand treat, and it's agin reason for me to pay what I didn't order."

"Oh, Jack," cried several, "pay like a man."

"I won't," cried he, furiously.

"You're a beat, then," shouted the landlord. Hardly had the words been spoken before Jack, with a bound, cleared the bar and landed himself upon the unlucky proprietor. All hands joined in the fray.

Tables, chairs, crockery, bottles and glasses flew around the restaurant in a lively manner, the air was resonant with oaths and yells. In the midst of the struggle Joe escaped in the street. As he walked along the wharf and reflected upon the mischief he had done, he was sorry for it. He had not foreseen the end of his joke. He thought that Jack, after some bickering, would have paid the score. He wished he could make some reparation for the act.

As he was walking thus he almost ran against Jack. The latter, though badly torn and beaten, wore a triumphant look. He had conquered in the fight.

"Avast, there, youngster," cried Jack, grabbing our hero's hand. "You were down in the crib when the muss broke out. I walloped the duffer, but what puzzles me is who the deuce made use of my voice."

"That was I," answered Joe, with a sudden burst of confidence.

"You!" cried Jack, in amazement.

Our hero, sorrowfully penitent, made a clean breast of the whole story.

"By Neptune," exclaimed Jack, "give's yer hand, boy, you're a trump. I forgive yer, and, what's more, I'll pay the damage. And yer want to go to sea, eh? Be a sailor. Well, there's the school-ship just goin' to heave anchor in an hour. Guess I'll get yer on there. Got any parents? Cut the crib, eh?"

"No, no," answered Joe, "my parents are dead. I have run away from my uncle who wanted to kill me."

"All right, then," cried Jack. "I'll be your guardian. There's the ship, now. Let's get on board."

An hour later when the school-ship *Minerva* left the pier with her prow headed for India, Joe was enrolled with about two hundred boys of his own age to make the voyage.

For the next two or three weeks our hero was too sea-sick and felt too miserable to cut up any capers. In that time, however, he had, quite rightly, come to the conclusion that the captain and the officers were low, brutal, miserable fellows, who omitted no opportunity to maltreat the boys given in charge to them by the government.

Among the boys themselves he had made a number of friends and some enemies. One to

whom he became particularly attached was a German boy of about sixteen years old, who, on account of his foreign ways and broken English, was constantly made the butt of the others' ridicule, and the victim of innumerable practical jokes.

Yacup was a quiet, inoffensive lad, and though he had at first borne the contumely with manly forbearance, yet their constant recurrence embittered his soul, and he keenly longed for a friend to champion his cause.

All these things Joe quietly noticed and resolved at some time to repay the boys in like coin.

They were now under a tropical sky and Joe was on his legs again, as full of life, vigor, and mischief as ever.

They were crossing the equator, and the boys thought it a good time to try a joke upon Yacup.

"Yacup," said Ben Bottle, the leader of the gang, a rough rowdy and cowardly bully, "we're on the line."

"Dat makes me noddins out," answered Yacup, turning away, for he dreaded some onslaught upon him.

"And Neptune, who is the god of the sea," continued Ben, "requires a sacrifice of some person from every ship that crosses the line."

"Vell," asked Yacup, respectfully, "and vat was dat to me?"

"The captain has singled you out to be thrown overboard, and given us the right to do it."

The captain was standing near and heard the words. He entered into the brutal joke, and exclaimed:

"Yes, drown the Dutchman."

Poor Yacup became pale and frightened. Whatever courage the boy may have had, had been taken from him by the repeated trials he had already undergone. He sank on his knees before the captain and with tears in his eyes, said:

"Oh, captain, please don't haf me drown'dt."

"Overboard with him," yelled the captain.

Ben Bottle and a number of other boys raised the struggling lad on high and were about to precipitate him into the sea when a deep bass voice apparently coming up from the depths of the ocean, exclaimed:

"I do not want him, I want Ben Bottle. Soon fire him to me or I will sink your craft."

Superstition is ever dominant in a sailor's mind. The boys dropped Yacup to the deck and stood gaping with open mouths at Ben who was trembling in every limb.

The captain looked stupefied. He had engaged in the sport in mere devilry and had intended to give Yacup only a good ducking. But now he regarded the ominous words as a direct admonition from Neptune, and tapping Ben's shoulder, said:

"Ben, my boy, make ready, you've got to go overboard."

"I won't, I won't," shrieked Ben. "I won't be drown'dt."

He yelled and screamed, he shouted and kicked, he begged and implored until Joe, disgusted at his cowardice, exclaimed:

"Heave him over, captain."

The captain, hardly laid hands upon him when he swooned away in a dead fright.

Joe wishing to change the subject now raised the cry of boy overboard.

"Where—where?" shouted the captain.

"Help—help!" came the sound of a human voice.

The boys crowded to the side of the vessel nearest to the cry of the person apparently drowning.

"Man the life-boat," ordered the captain.

A minute later, the first mate, Joe, and several others were rowing over the wide waters in search of the drowning boy.

"Help!" faintly cried the voice—"help!"

"Keep up, my boy," cried the mate, "we're coming for you. But I can't see you, where the deuce are you?"

"Here, here!" cried the voice, apparently coming from the direction diametrically opposite to that in which they were rowing.

The mate ordered the men to steer about, and the life-boat dashed ahead.

"I can hold out no longer," cried the voice again in an entirely different direction.

"Well, this beats everything!" exclaimed the mate, in surprise. "How the deuce do you manage to shift your quarters? Where are you now?"

"Under the boat," cried the voice. "Look out—oh, I'm struck—I'm sinking!"

There was a sound of gasping and gurgling right underneath them, and then all was silent.

"His goose is cooked," said the mate, still mystified. "What the devil is the matter to-day, anyhow? Is the vessel bewitched?"

He gave orders to row back to the ship, and fell into a brown study.

As soon as the party were on deck again, the

captain piped up all hands, and called the roll of all the boys.

No one was missing, not even Ben Bottle, for he had recovered from his swoon, and stood in line.

"Darnation!" said the captain, "there's some trick at the bottom of this. I'll be bound to find it out."

"I know who it is," said a boy, advancing from the line.

"Who is it that is playing all these tricks?" asked the captain.

"It's Joe Dodger," answered the informant, "he's the Boy Ventriloquist."

Joe turned to see who it was that knew his secret, and was betraying him.

He immediately recognized the little rascal.

It was Sneaking Bob, his old enemy.

## CHAPTER V.

### JOE AND YACUP JOIN FORTUNES.

A SINGLE word to explain the presence of Sneaking Rob on the *Minerva*. Having betrayed Joe to the school-master he was terribly afraid of our hero's resentment, and therefore begged the august board to protect him. That body of functionaries having the school-ship under their control dispatched him on board of it, and he was enrolled the day previous to that on which our hero came on board.

One can judge the surprise he felt at his discovering that his enemy was with him, and he studiously kept out of his sight until this moment. The desire to injure Joe was, however, too strong for his prudence to overcome. Hence his revelation of Joe's secret.

The sky presaging a thunder-storm appears not blacker or fiercer than did the countenance of the captain at the announcement. He fairly foamed with rage.

"Joe Dodger," shouted he, "step forward, sir!"

Our hero mechanically obeyed.

"Now, sir," added the enraged captain, "I'll teach you, sir, to send me on a wild-geese chase again; I'll show you how to cut capers aboard of this vessel; I'll learn you who is master here."

"I am sensible, sir," answered our hero, with great dignity, "that I have done wrong, and though the fellow who told on me is a mean, despicable wretch, yet I am willing to endure whatever punishment you may inflict upon me."

"Oh, you're willing, are you?" sneered the captain. "Well, I don't care whether you are or not. Perhaps you'll change your mind before the performance is over."

He summoned two stalwart men of the crew, and they pounced upon our hero, like wolves on their prey. They stripped the clothes from his back, bound him against the main-mast, and then one of them pulling forth a ferocious-looking cowhide, asked with a grin:

"How many, captain?"

"Give him fifty," cried the brute; "then salt him and tie him aloft."

Joe snudged as he heard the fearful punishment which he was about to suffer, but not a word escaped his compressed lips.

The boys all drawn up in line would gladly have come to his rescue if they had dared to; as it was they could not but be witnesses of his suffering and degradation.

Yacup was especially affected, for he felt that to the trick for which our hero was about to pay the penalty he owed his life.

"Captain," said he, sobbing, "please don't yer licks Joe. It was all mine fault. Let him go and licks me so much as he likes."

"Silence, scoundrel," roared the captain, knocking him in the stomach, "how dare you speak without permission. If you want to be whipped so badly, I'll settle yer hash after I get done with this young mutineer."

The poor boy was thus cowed into silence, and he could do nothing but wring his arms and weep aloud.

The ruffian who swung the cowhide gave it to our hero thick and fast across the naked back.

At first Joe stood the blows with Roman firmness, but when dark blue seams appeared down his back, when the sharp thongs cut into his flesh and the blood spurted from his many wounds, then his courage forsook him, and he could not help exclaiming:

"Oh, captain, bid them stop! I am punished enough."

"Lay on, my hearty," urged the captain, mocking our hero's cries; "lay 'em on heavy."

The full fifty lashes were meted out, and, when the barbarous deed was done, Joe was insensible from pain and loss of blood.

The two sailors unbound him and stretched him on the deck. They then took large handfuls

of salt and rubbed it into the bleeding flesh. This last barbarity might have been spared our hero, for he felt not the smart. Then they hurriedly clothed him, and, bearing him aloft, bound him, still insensible, with strong cords to the upper portion of the mast.

When Joe recovered consciousness it was dark night. The sky was hung with a pall of heavy clouds, a low wind moaned through the riggings, all gloomy and dismal.

At first Joe could not comprehend where he was, but the smarting of his wounds awakened him to a lively consciousness of his position.

"The inhuman wretch," exclaimed he, bitterly, "to torture me thus. If ever I get ashore I'll report him to the authorities. Surely the law cannot be on his side. If I ever get ashore—who knows? I feel weak; the cords with which I am bound seem like red-hot chains searing and burning my flesh. If I am not soon released, I shall surely perish. That rascal Bob; oh, wouldn't I like to meet him face to face. I'd give him a walloping he would never forget as long as he lived."

Our hero continued in this strain for a long time, alternately giving vent to feelings of rage, indignation, and pain. How many hours he had been thus chained he knew not; how much longer the cruel captain would torture him he was equally ignorant of. To the physical pains he suffered were those of an intense thirst and fierce hunger.

He shouted aloud from his dizzy height, but none below seemed to hear. If they did, they paid no attention to his heart-rending cries. He heard the bells ring to change the watch. From that he knew it was midnight. The clouds that had gathered during the night now poured forth a steady flow of drizzling rain. His clothes became soaked with wet, and though that at first offered a temporary relief from the pains of his wounds, yet it caused him to shiver and quake with chills.

"Oh," murmured he, "I shall be dead before morning if I am not released. Have I not a single friend on board the ship who would brave the captain's resentment to save my life?"

He had such a one.

A dark form cautiously and secretly climbed up the mast until it stood beside him.

"Joe!"

"Yacup!"

"Hush," whispered the German lad, "you safes mine life to-day, and I haf come to safes yours."

He pulled a knife from his bosom and severed the cord that bound our hero's arms.

The latter grasped Yacup's hand and fervently exclaimed:

"Heaven bless you. You shall be my friend forever."

"Dond you shpeak so lout, der vatch will hear you."

"Who's on the watch?"

"Dose two big rascals Bob and Ben."

"And the captain?"

"Oh, he was dead drunk, shleepin' like von big log on the floor von der cabin."

By this time Yacup had gradually loosened all the cords that bound Joe. A sense of deadly faintness overcame him as he was set free, and he would have toppled to the deck had not his releaser held him firmly to the mast. The weakness was, however, but momentary, and the thought that he was now free to descend revived him wonderfully.

"How was you?" asked Yacup; "does you feels very sore about der back?"

"A little stiff," answered Joe, "but I guess I can manage it. I say, Yacup, we can no longer remain on board the vessel. If the captain discovers us we are both lost. Have you the courage to capture with me the life-boat, desert the ship, and trust to luck?"

"Vere you goes, I go mit you. So help me der fader vot ish in heaven."

"Now, then," whispered our hero, "let us get down to the deck."

They cautiously descended and reached the deck without awakening any suspicion. They provided themselves with stout ropes, and concealed themselves behind some bales of cotton which formed part of the cargo.

All unconscious of the presence of our hero on the deck, Ben and Bob stood on the fore-castle conversing with each other in low tones to while away the dreariness of their watch.

A low moan startled them.

"What's that?" gasped Bob.

"It's some one dying," whispered Ben, aghast.

"Perhaps it's Joe, giving up the ghost," murmured Bob.

"I am the spirit of him whom you betrayed to his death."

The words were uttered in a low, mournful

tone, proceeding apparently from the rigging. The sound struck terror to the boys. They dropped on their knees with affright.

The next instant they were seized, bound and gagged, and lying helpless on the deck, with Joe and Yacup standing triumphantly before them.

"So my fine buck," hissed our hero, brandishing a knife before Bob's eyes, "you thought you had the best of the boy ventriloquist. What's to hinder me from cutting out that tattling tongue of yours?"

"Und," added Yacup, addressing Ben, "Shposin' now I shucks you into the ocean, eh, likes you want to do mit me."

Unable to utter a word, the baffled young rascals could only plead for mercy with their eyes.

It was not, however, the intention of our hero to do them any bodily harm. Being safe from interruption he, with the aid of Yacup, lowered the life-boat, and having equipped it with whatever necessities he thought proper, descended into it, followed by his German friend, and forever parted company with the vessel on board of which he had been so shamefully misused.

A few sturdy strokes of the oars put them entirely out of sight of the ship, and they then rested, and allowed their boat to drift along with the tide. They were now on the wide waste of waters. The rain had ceased falling, but the sky was still of an inky blackness.

The exercise of rowing and the excitement of their desertion had done our hero much good. The stiffness left his body, and he felt no longer chilly. Having regaled himself with some water and food, which he stowed on board the boat, he stretched himself on the seat and sank into a refreshing sleep.

Meanwhile Yacup faithfully kept watch, so that no harm might befall them.

With early dawn Joe awoke, and felt as well as he ever did in his life. They ate their morning meal, and Yacup was about to go to sleep in his turn when he espied a vessel heaving near.

They hailed the ship, and were taken on board.

The vessel was the good ship *Alcanthus*, hailing from India, and bound for New York with cargo and passengers.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CONFLAGRATION.

THE captain of the *Alcanthus*, named Sampson, was just the opposite in manner and behavior to the brutal officer of the *Minerva*. Having kindly taken the boys on board of his vessel and patiently listened to the story of their woes, he provided them with new garments and enrolled the boys among his crew.

For some days Joe remained quiet, studying the various features of his new quarters, and reminded by an occasional twinge of pain of his old ones. But when a week had passed, and nothing remained of his wounds but dark blue scars, which, however, did not pain him; when he had investigated every nook and cranny of the vessel, he thought it his duty to enliven the monotony of the voyage by some exciting sport.

The vessel was a steamship, and had immense boilers, beneath which roared and blazed the fires in the gigantic furnaces.

Joe was standing with Yacup near the fireman, who was explaining to them the fearful heat in the furnaces, and what would be the effect if some one, by accident, should be caught in it.

"Why," said he, "only yesterday there were a dozen men repairing the tubes of the boilers. Suppose one of them should have got stuck between the bars and remained undiscovered until after I had lit the fires."

As if in confirmation of the fireman's words, the sound of a human groan proceeded directly from the condenser.

The fireman dropped his shovel and gazed at the blazing fires with open-mouthed astonishment. Yacup also was dumfounded. As for Joe, who was indeed the author of the mysterious sound, he could scarcely restrain his laughter at the comical faces his companions made.

"By vat der deibel is dat?" exclaimed Yacup.

"Oh, I'm a-roasting, shure," came from the furnace.

"There's a man in there," ejaculated the fireman.

"Nonsense," said Joe, in his natural voice. "How can a person be alive in midst of a blazing fire. Why, you told us but a minute ago that it was impossible."

"What's impossible?" asked the captain, stepping up.

"The fireman here," continued Joe, "wants to make us boys believe that there's a live man in that red-hot condenser."

"Mr. Jackson," said the captain, sternly, "are

you playing upon the credulity of those boys, or are you intoxicated?"

"Neither, sir," answered the fireman, with a puzzled expression on his face; "but—hark!"

Again a low moan was borne on the incandescent air that issued out with the steam.

"Why, what can be the meaning of this?" exclaimed the captain.

"Oh, captin', darlin'," exclaimed the man in the condenser with a rich Irish brogue, "it's fearful hot in here. Shure, I'm roast beef already."

Had the captain paused but a moment to think, he would at once have perceived the impossibility of the thing. But no—he had heard the man speak; his ears could not deceive him. He was sure there was some one in the condenser.

"Poor fellow," exclaimed the captain, "what can we do for you?"

"Oh!" cried the salamander, "don't stand there a-talkin', and I'm bein' done brown. Shut off the steam afore I'm burnt to cinders."

The captain gave the requisite order and the steam was shut off, as a consequence of which the whole machinery stopped its work, and the passengers came pouring down to inquire the cause of stoppage.

Joe had now quite a large audience.

The captain explained the cause of his trouble. His statements were, however, received with laughter and incredulity, which, however, were soon changed to mute and silent faith by hearing the words:

"Will ye look at them blackguards. Fust they roast me, an' now they're jabberin' an' talkin' instead of helping me out."

A number of those present volunteered to enter the condenser, which had now cooled down, in order to drag out the unfortunate wretch whom they thought within.

"Well?" inquired the captain, after several had entered and looked about.

"He's not in the condenser at all," answered the fireman, who made one of the party.

"Not in the condenser!" ejaculated the captain.

"Where the deuce is he then?"

"Sure I'm in the boiler!"

Horror of horrors! A man actually living and talking in an atmosphere of superheated steam.

"Oh, you're in the boiler," exclaimed the captain, with a sneer, "and pray how do you like your new quarters?"

"Oh, quite well, thank ye," answered the voice. "It's a trifle cowlid, but I'll feel all right in a few minutes."

This ludicrous reply was received by the hearers with shouts of laughter. Joe, however, was anxious in some way to terminate the scene without drawing the captain's resentment upon his head. When, therefore, the fireman who had come out of the furnace opened the safety-valve and let out some steam, our hero saw fit to let the mysterious occupant of the boiler escape by the same valve.

"I'm out," cried the unknown, "I'm the spirit of the steam, I'm a-floatin' away wid it, good-bye, good-bye, good-bye."

At each repetition of the word "good-bye" the voice sounded weaker and more distant, and seemed to be following the cloud of steam that had left the boiler.

The mysterious stranger having departed, the fireman relit the fires and the captain and passengers scattered themselves over the deck, all discussing the extraordinary event that had broken the uniform current of their ship-board life.

At the dining-table the discussion was renewed, and Joe, who with Yacup, were temporarily acting as waiters, was highly amused at the equally ludicrous explanations advanced to meet the ludicrous occurrence.

One gentleman, however, said:

"Although not present at the extraordinary performances, I have carefully listened to the various reports thereof, and after weighing the subject in my mind I have come to the only rational conclusion possible under the circumstances. And that is that there is a ventriloquist among us, to whose wonderful skill we owe this day's enjoyment, and who, I hope, will reveal himself to us, so that we may obtain for him Captain Sampson's pardon, and beg him to give us further evidences of his ability."

Of course everybody immediately exclaimed, "Just as I thought," and "didn't I tell you so?" It was the story of the egg of Columbus repeated. After the riddle had been solved everybody knew it all the time.

"Vy," exclaimed Yacup, who had listened attentively to the gentleman's explanation, "I shust dinks of it. Der feller vat makes all der fun is mine friend, Joe Dodger."

Our hero, with a blush of pardonable pride, admitted that he was the author of all the trouble, and he was immediately lionized by the company.

"My lad," exclaimed the captain, shaking him

by the hand, "I forgive you this time, but give me notice when you want to play a trick upon me again."

"That would spoil all the fun, sir," replied Joe, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye.

Our hero gave further specimens of his powers and kept the table in a constant roar of laughter.

After dinner was over the gentleman who had hit the nail on the head called Joe into the state-room.

As he, and more especially his daughter, are important personages in our story, they deserve a moment's description.

Mr. Templeton was a man of about forty years of age, and in the prime of manhood.

Born in New York, and of influential family, he had obtained the position of United States Consul in Calcutta when he barely attained his majority. Since his twenty-first year he had resided in India, and his constant residence there had darkened his features so that he appeared quite oriental in aspect.

He had fallen in love and married a native princess of enormous wealth, who, subsequently to her marriage, had embraced the Christian faith.

Their union, which was one of unalloyed bliss, had been blessed by an only child, Fay Templeton, now a beautiful girl of fifteen, who combined in her person the sturdy vigor of her American father and the ravishing loveliness of her Indian mother.

Within a year, however, Mr. Templeton's wife had died, bequeathing her wealth to her husband and child, and Mr. Templeton, unable to endure the painful associations connected with the residence where he had passed so happy a life, resigned his consulship, and was now on his way to his native home, accompanied by his daughter Fay, and an Indian servant named Lookah.

The latter had been a rajah, or prince, in his own province, but the territory having been conquered by the father of the princess, he became a slave, and after Mr. Templeton's marriage a servant of the latter.

He was highly cultured, and spoke the English language as fluently as a native.

He wore the European dress, and when standing beside Mr. Templeton it was often difficult to determine which was the master and which the servant.

What secret thoughts were buried in his mind were never known.

Perhaps he, too, loved the princess; and it must have filled him with jealous rage to behold her the wife of a foreigner.

The wealth, also, which now belonged to Mr. Templeton had once been his own, and he, who had once ruled over thousands of slaves, was now a slave, a servant.

If such thoughts were in his mind, he never betrayed them, but for years and years had been a faithful attendant upon Mr. Templeton.

Joe fell in love outright with Fay. There was no two ways about it.

They were intimate friends after the first words had passed between them, and when she laughed and clapped her hands in childish glee at his sportive tricks, he felt that he would go through fire and water for her sake.

In a burst of confidence he related the adventures he had already passed through, and showed the marks upon his person in affirmation of his words.

"Poor Joe," whispered she, tears of sympathy filling her beautiful eyes. "But that bad captain and your bad uncle shall never harm you again. You shall always stay with us. My papa shall adopt you as his own son. Won't you, papa?"

Her father had approached them, and heard the latter portion of the conversation.

"I will, my boy," said he. "You and Fay shall be brother and sister."

Somehow or other this arrangement did not quite suit our hero.

Why, he could not tell.

Perhaps in time he would better be able to analyze the emotion which swayed his heart.

At midnight Joe and Yacup were sitting on the deck indulging in mutual confidence, in which the beauty and accomplishments of Fay formed a fruitful topic of conversation.

They saw a form glide through the rigging.

They could not determine whether it was Mr. Templeton or Lookah.

It resembled both.

The next minute a sheet of flame shot out from the hold, followed by a dense cloud of smoke.

The ship was in flames.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ON THE WIDE WATERS.

FIRE!

What sounds more terrible to the luckless pas-

senger, starting at dead of night from his hammock.

The ship is his world, and that world is a burning hades itself.

Whither should he flee?

The tumultuous waves before him open wide their foam-capped mouths to engulf him.

Seething tongues of flame shoot up to the right, to the left, behind him.

He has the melancholy satisfaction of a choice of deaths.

Up from the sleep they shall never again enjoy start the affrighted passengers.

In hot haste they attire themselves in the first garments they can reach; in wild confusion they rush on deck.

Cries, curses, prayers, groanings join in one mighty shriek, that for a moment drowns the roaring of the flames.

Men rush hither and thither in utter distraction; women are everywhere stretched insensible on the burning deck; children cling to their parent's breast and scream with terror.

It is, indeed, a terrible scene.

The crew are demoralized.

In vain the captain commands them to fight the fire; they are deaf to his orders, discipline has vanished; chaos reigns supreme.

The captain, to intimidate the others, shoots a refractory sailor in the head.

It has a contrary effect.

Maddened by the loss of their comrade, the mutinous sailors rush upon the captain, disarm him, and strike him senseless to the deck.

They are now their own master.

The first use they make of their immunity from punishment, is to break open the hold where a cargo of brandy is stowed away.

They smash in the heads of the barrels and fill themselves with the deadly liquor.

The floor of the hold becomes saturated with the brandy, and the flames gain a new impulse thereby.

The intoxicated crew are no longer human beings; they are beasts, worse in their instincts than hyenas that feed on human corpses.

With threats and blows they drive the passengers from the life-boats.

Those who resist are hurled into the flames or cast into the raging sea.

The bestial crew are now in possession of the boats; they lower them into the water, spring in and row away, leaving the helpless passengers to their fate.

The scene at this moment is terribly magnificent.

The lurid flames wrap the doomed ship in a wild splendor; for miles around the heavy canopy of smoke is tinged with the radiance of the setting sun; the waves reflect the scene, and a phantom ship is burned beneath the surface of the sea.

The terrible heat drives the passengers as high up the mast as they can advance; they cling to the rigging with the iron grip of despair.

Beneath them the flames encircle the masts, and the mighty poles, burdened by the precious load, rock to and fro like reeds in the wind.

Every moment threatens to hurl the mass of humanity into the burning gulf below them.

Already hundreds of them, unable to endure the suspense, have voluntarily let go their hold, and their blackened bodies are crackling and roasting in the flames.

Suddenly a bright flame illumines the heavens; a reverberation like that accompanying the discharge of a hundred cannon follows.

The burning ship rises from the sea and shoots like a rocket into the sky.

A wild, piercing shriek is borne over the waters, and all is over.

The flames had reached the magazine.

When Joe and Yacup discovered that the ship was on fire their first thought was to inform Mr. Templeton and Fay of the danger that threatened their lives.

They hastily rushed to the state-room occupied by the pair and Lookah.

The door was locked, and they banged against it with all their might.

"Who is there?" cried Lookah, with a yawn, as if awakening from a deep slumber.

"For Heaven's sake, Lookah," cried Joe, "awaken Mr. Templeton and Fay; the ship's a-fire!"

"Mercy upon us!" exclaimed Lookah from within.

There was a sound as if he was getting out of his hammock, and the next moment the door was opened, and the boys entered, to find the Indian servant in his night-clothes and Fay still soundly sleeping.

"Where is Mr. Templeton?" cried our hero, seeing that the remaining bed was unoccupied.

"What!" cried Lookah, in tones of astonishment, "is he not in his bed?"

"No," answered Yacup.

"And you say the ship's on fire?" inquired he.

"Yes," replied our hero, a sad suspicion arising in his mind. "And it is the work of an incendiary. We saw a man ascend from the hold."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Lookah, half aloud; "he has escaped my watch!"

"What do you mean?" asked Joe, anxiously.

"I mean that Mr. Templeton has fired the ship."

"Impossible!" cried the boys in concert.

"For years," continued the servant, "when the moon is full, Mr. Templeton, affected by a strange disease, has been in the habit of arising from his bed while in a somnambulistic state. He then commits acts which he would not dream of in his waking condition. I have carefully kept guard over him so as to prevent any mischief, but to-night he has eluded my vigilance. You see," added he, pointing through the window at the luminous sun of the night, "the moon is at its full."

"Arouse Fay and see that she is safe," said Joe. "I will search for Mr. Templeton."

"No," replied Lookah. "You and Yacup tend to Fay; it will be best for me to look for Mr. Templeton. I can bring him back, so that no suspicion attaches itself to him."

So saying, the Indian glided from the room, leaving the boys alone with the sleeping girl.

Joe advanced to her bed and gently touched her lily-white shoulder.

The contact caused a thrill of pleasure to shoot through his frame.

He could not restrain an exclamation of admiration at her wonderful beauty.

The light touch awakened her, and she sat up in bed, gazing at him in surprise.

"Joe," asked she, wonderingly, "you here?"

"Fay," answered our hero, excitedly, "quickly arise and dress yourself. The ship is on fire."

"On fire!" cried she, looking around the room in alarm. "Where is my father?"

"With Lookah," answered Joe, unwilling to tell her the whole story. "Come, quickly dress yourself, and we will join them."

Fay sprang lightly from the bed and hastily donned her clothes. Then the three left the state-room and proceeded to the deck. An instant's glance revealed to Joe that he had no time to lose. The flames were rapidly gaining headway, and the passengers were awakening to the peril in which they found themselves.

As yet the boats were untouched, but he knew that perhaps a minute later it would be impossible to procure one.

"Yacup," ordered he, "help me lower a boat."

"All right," answered Yacup.

"Will we leave without father?" asked Fay, anxiously.

"It is too dangerous to remain on board the ship," replied Joe. "We can remain in the vicinity for some time."

Though much against her will to go without her parent, Fay was by circumstances forced to submit.

The boat was quickly lowered, and as it already contained provisions and water for some days, the three lost no time in descending into it.

Joe and Yacup rowed the boat about one hundred yards away from the burning vessel, when they rested on their oars and watched the awful spectacle presented to their eyes.

In vain they waited for a sight of Mr. Templeton or Lookah; neither of them appeared. When the explosion took place Fay sobbed aloud:

"Oh, my father, my poor father! He is killed!"

Joe could offer her but little comfort, and silently gave orders to Yacup to row from the sad spot.

The sun arose the next morning in all its refulgence. From a cloudless sky it shone upon the placid waves. The ship had entirely disappeared from view; nothing was visible of the terrible catastrophe except the burned and charred fragments of the wreck floating on the waters, with here and there a disfigured corpse tossed lightly by the waves.

The young party were now alone on the wide waters. No land was in sight. Nothing greeted their vision but the boundless ocean and the clear blue sky. They ate sparingly of their rations, for they knew not how long they would drift along separated from all the world.

The days grew into weeks, and still no sign of land, no sight of a passing vessel.

Their stock of water was entirely gone. Of their provisions they had but a few pounds of crackers left. If they were not soon rescued starvation would stare them in the face.

To these privations were added the burning heat of a tropical sky, and the exhaustion con-

sequent to severe physical labor and the want of sleep.

Yacup loudly gave vent to his feelings.

"Oh, I am shust der unluckiest boy vat vas ever born!" grumbled he. "First I gets me put on der school-ship, und am half killed by der captain und dot Ben Bottle, den I comes on der odder ship und I likes to get roasted, now I tinks I shust starve to death. I wish I haf some pork und beans, mit a little sauerkraut und one glass, of beer. That vud make me feel shust bully."

But he sighed for these delicacies in vain, and grew more and more morose and sad.

Joe also felt a sinking of the heart, but not a sound of repining escaped his lips at sight of the wonderful fortitude with which Fay endured the general load of suffering.

She, by nature the weakest of the three, frail in body, and mourning for her father's loss, still had a cheerful smile and a pleasant word to sustain and encourage her companions. She would not allow them to deprive themselves of the slightest comfort for her sake, but shared all the burdens alike, even to taking her turn at the oar, and in watching.

Both Joe and Yacup found a temporary relief from their toils in frequent bathing, a pleasure they indulged in several times each day.

They were sporting in the waves as if that were their natural element, when an agonized shriek of Fay startled them.

"A shark, a shark," screamed she, arising in the boat in wild terror.

They glanced behind them. There, hardly a hundred yards off, appeared the hideous form of the ravenous monster. His fins glistened like swords in the sunlight. Already he turned upon his back and opened wide his monstrous jaws with its double set of pointed teeth. With lightning speed he was rushing upon his destined prey.

The boys were paralyzed with fear unable to move hand or foot. Their doom seemed to be sealed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE STORM.

ABOUT a week after the conflagration of the *Alcantara*, the good ship *Fortune* bound for New York came across a raft formed of materials from the wreck.

On the raft a man was standing waving a signal of distress, another was lying bound by cords to the beams. Some provisions, a small keg of water, and a few pieces of lumber constituted the whole of their cargo.

"Raft ahoy," greeted the captain of the *Fortune*.

"Ship ahoy," answered the man standing erect.

"Who are you?" asked the captain.

"I am Alvah Templeton," answered the other, "late United States Consul at Calcutta, and the man lying here bound is my servant Lookah."

"What's the matter with him?" inquired the captain.

"His skull is crushed in, and he's an idiot for life."

"How did it occur?"

"Trying to save my life from being destroyed in the conflagration of the ship in which I was journeying homeward, he was struck on the head by the falling mast."

"It is a wonder he was not killed outright."

"It is, and he would have perished were it not for my grateful care. I have been obliged to bind him as you see, for, poor man, he is not in his right senses, and would drown himself."

The effect of this conversation was that the captain lowered a boat, manned it with some of his crew and, rowing to the castaways, he transferred them from the raft to his boat and thence to the ship.

We left Joe and Yacup in the water with the shark open-mouthed bearing down upon them. It was a rather ticklish position to be in, yet our hero did not despair. He had one resource still left by which to save his life and that of his friend. That was his art as a ventriloquist, hitherto it had never deserted him, would it stand by him now.

Some may smile at the idea of vanquishing a shark by ventriloquism. Yet that was the only weapon of defense, if any, available to Joe. Both he and Yacup were stark naked, Fay too terror-stricken to throw them a knife; they dared not move, the shark was within a few yards of them, if Joe failed in the wild speculation, what hope was there for any one?

The shark, for some reason or other, went first for Yacup.

"Oh, it ish all up mit me," exclaimed he, involuntarily closing his eyes.

The voracious monster was just about to make one mouthful of the boy's head, when Joe, with a mighty effort, perfectly imitated the roar of the spouting of the whale, making the sound appear immediately behind the shark.

It is well known that the whale and shark are deadly enemies, and though they often meet in battle, still the latter has a wholesome dread of the former.

When, therefore, the shark imagined his ancient foe to be so close at his heels, he relinquished his intended prey, and made a quick turn-about to meet his opponent.

"Now Yacup," cried Joe, "strike out for the boat quickly, and throw a knife to me. I'll tackle the old boy."

"You shust bet I vill," answered Yacup, striking out hand over hand.

He sprang into the boat, threw a bowie-knife to our hero, who deftly caught it by the handle, and then putting on his clothes, he and Fay watched the forthcoming struggle with intense excitement.

If there ever was a shark struck with astonishment it was this one. He couldn't understand it. His ears had not deceived him; he had heard the war-note of his enemy, and had expected an attack upon his rear; and yet when he turned about boldly to face the foe, he was nowhere to be seen. Had he been endowed with the faculty of speech, he would no doubt have given vent to his feeling in the following elegant exclamation: "Where the deuce is the old buffer?"

The incident was so ludicrous that all of the party burst out in a loud, ringing peal of laughter.

This sound of human glee recalled to the shark's mind, if he had one, the banquet he had deserted, and he turned towards the place where he had left his victim. Yacup was, however, no longer in the water, and the shark, expressing his disappointment by lashing the sea with his tail, turned his attention to our hero.

Joe let him come up quite close, and then again made a whale spout some distance behind the shark.

The monster turned about with lightning speed, this time fully expecting to meet his foe. He was of course again disappointed, and that was too much for the good nature of any shark. His feelings were ruffled, and had there really been a whale in sight a battle would have ensued worthy of the pen of Homer to describe.

Joe sounded the war-note to the right, and in that direction started the shark; then to the left, and the monster changed his course. Before him, behind him, around, about, spouted invisible whales, until the shark must have supposed himself surrounded by a cohort of spiritual foes. Now as this particular fish was no believer in spiritualism, nor a medium, he gave up any attempt to wrestle with a crowd of disembodied whales. Besides, he was not afraid of a thousand enemies who could do nothing but spout, and, therefore, giving his tail a shake of supreme contempt, he, for the third time, faced about to begin his interrupted repast.

This time, however, he was destined to meet a determined foe; for our hero, diving beneath the surface of the water, came up right under the belly of the shark, and, with all the strength he was capable of, drove his knife to the hilt in the head of the shark. Quickly withdrawing the weapon, he stabbed the monster again and again.

The sea round about became incarnadined with the blood flowing from the many wounds. Mad-dened by pain, the shark lashed the waves into fury, he dived down—down—until he entirely disappeared from view.

The terrible exertion, and the protracted stay in the water, had completely exhausted our hero, and he, also, would have sunk never to rise again, had not Yacup rowed the boat near him, and dragged him in an almost senseless condition into the boat.

Yacup clad him in his garments, and gave him a draught of brandy, which they had on board, though as yet untasted. This draught revived him wonderfully, and in a few minutes he was as lively again as ever. The shark now reappeared on the surface of the water; but it was no longer the dreaded monster. Joe's vigorous blows had had their effect, and the misguided creature floated on its back, a helpless corpse.

Joe and Yacup secured the body to the stern of the boat by the aid of a rope, and cutting out the most tender portions of the rump, dried them by the heat of the sun, and thus they had shark-steaks for supper; which, under the circumstances, were highly relished by all, even Fay included.

During the following night a copious shower fell; and, using every available thing on board as receptacles, they obtained a store of water sufficient to last them for several days, and which,

being mixed with a little brandy, was highly acceptable.

They were now, for some time at least, secure from perishing by hunger and thirst, and accordingly became quite merry in feelings.

Joe made the time pass quite rapidly, by the amusement afforded by the exercise of his skill in ventriloquism, and though he frequently made Yacup the victim of his practical jokes, the latter was too good-natured to take offense thereby.

As they drifted along they noticed various signs that announced to them that they were in the vicinity of land. The sea for miles would be covered with sea-weed, leaves and branches; sometimes whole trunks of trees drifted past them. The air was perfumed by the scent of flowers, and with a plumb-line they could touch the bottom at several fathoms' depth.

"We shall soon land," exclaimed Joe, joyfully.

"Vere?" asked Yacup, "in New York?"

"In New York!" laughed Fay. "I should rather think in Africa."

"I believe that we are near the South African coast," said Joe.

"Oh, mine gracious!" cried Yacup. "Shpose now we lands on a place vere dere is savages, und they catch us und eat us ub, eh?"

"I guess they'd find you rather tough," laughed Joe.

"Vell, vell," replied Yacup, with a sigh, "if dev dose eat me ub, I wish I was so tough dat I sit me right on dere stomick, und make dem all sick."

"That would be some consolation any way," merrily replied Fay.

Thus they passed the day, buoyant with the hope of a speedy sight of land.

The sun sank blood-red into the ocean. An ominous calm lay dull and heavy over the sea, not a breath of air stirred. An oppressive silence reigned about.

"Heaven help us," muttered Joe, half aloud, "if it overtakes us before we land."

"Vat overtakes us?" asked Yacup.

"The storm," replied our hero, gravely.

"What!" cried Fay, "are we going to have a storm? Why, see how calm and still everything is. See how beautiful the sun sets; why, there's not a cloud in the sky, except that small black speck just at the horizon."

"Ay, ay!" exclaimed Joe, "the signs are unmistakable; that small speck, which seems no larger than my hand, will, in a short time, grow so huge as to cover the whole sky with a pall of leaden clouds. The air that is now so sweet with perfume, will be impregnated with the smell of phosphorus; instead of no wind at all, a tornado will sweep this region, tearing all before it in its insensate fury; the rain will come down in torrents, the lightning flash, the thunder roar, the calm, placid waves will be lashed into tempestuous fury. Hark!"

A low, rumbling noise was heard. It was the sound of distant thunder. The storm so beautifully described by our hero was upon them.

As in obedience to the wave of the magician's wand the whole aspect of the heavens underwent the change. The bright blue, sky had disappeared, and clouds of inky blackness changed the day into night. The water assumed a dull greenish color, a sudden gust of wind swept past them, and dashed the spray of the foam-capped waves over their persons. A blinding flash of lightning descended from the skies and entered the water a few feet from the boat, a thunder-clap followed that seemed to rend the earth in twain. The clouds burst, and a deluge of rain descended.

The wind now blew a hurricane, and the mountainous wave raised the frail boat, with its precious occupants, so high that they seemed to be soaring into the sky. The next moment the boat was swiftly descending—headlong—as into the bowels of the earth. The bow struck the water and the boat capsized, hurling its human freight into the raging main. And, overwhelming their agonized shrieks, the waves, the thunder, the rain, and the hurricane, united in one tremendous, mighty, supernatural roar.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CAST UP BY THE SEA.

It was morning.

Bright and beautiful shone the sun from the cloudless sky. A gentle breeze, laden with the perfume of many flowers, broke the placid surface of the ebbing sea into ripples. All was still, calm, and peaceful. What a change from the hours of the previous night!

As far as the eye could reach a low beach reflected the rays of the sun from its white, dazzling sand. At a distance beyond the beach tropical forests arose in all their luxuriant vegetation. From out the dense foliage rang loud and clear

the feathered songsters' melody. All nature smiled and rejoiced.

Stretched on the sand, just beyond the reach of the rippling waves, locked in each other's embrace, mute and senseless, lay Joe and Fay.

The heat of the sun had dried their dripping garments and tinged their pale cheeks with the hue of the rose. Their arms were around each other's waist. Fay's head was nestled on our hero's breast.

What a picture of blissful innocence! There they slept—that boy ignorant as yet of the passion which fires at once the basest and noblest emotions of our soul; that girl, too young to dream of love, just old enough to cherish our hero with a sister's devotion. Happy pair; Heaven's blessings upon you. The first to wake was Fay. Her eyelids gently quivered, then opened. Her gaze met the clear, blue vault of Heaven, she inhaled the perfumed air, her ear was greeted by what seemed to her to be the sound of celestial music. She thought she had passed beyond the vale of sorrow, and entered the gates of paradise. And yet the measure of her joy seemed incomplete. She slightly raised her head and beheld her sleeping companion. A smile of angelic bliss parted her lips.

"Oh, I am so happy," she gently murmured, and dropping her head again on his breast relapsed into sleep.

When our hero opened his eyes the day had already far advanced, and the sun, just about sinking beyond the horizon, rendered the scene still more beautiful by a ruddy refulgence. He, too, for a moment thought himself in the realms of bliss, but consciousness awoke the memory of the terrible storm, and he recognized that a beneficent Providence had preserved his life and the life of the dear creature reposing beside him.

Her breath which fanned his cheek and the regular beating of her heart close to his assured him that she was enjoying a refreshing slumber. He remained perfectly still for a time, fearful of disturbing her rest; but as the day waned and night crept on he felt it to be his duty to awaken her.

Gently lifting her beautiful head from his breast, he arose and kneeling beside her softly touched her shoulder and whispered:

"Fay."

The girl awoke and sitting up, wonderingly looked around, exclaiming:

"Are we in Heaven, Joe?"

"Do you feel hungry, Fay?" asked he, with a smile.

"Yes," answered she, "and thirsty too."

"And I'm the same," replied he, "that shows we're not in Heaven."

"Where are we then?"

"That's more than I know; very likely on the coast of Africa."

"Oh, Heavens," cried she, springing to her feet, "we'll be killed by the savages, or eaten by the wild animals."

"We will trust to Providence," said Joe, arising, "and to my trusty knife, which remains in my belt, for our protection."

"But, Joe," asked Fay, looking around, "where is Yacup?"

"Alas, poor boy," said Joe, sorrowfully, "I see him nowhere, I fear he is drowned."

"I'm so sorry," answered she, with tears in her eyes, "he was such a good boy, and true friend."

"We have no time for lamenting," said Joe. "Let us go to yonder clump of trees. All kinds of fruit grow wild in these regions. We may find some to appease our hunger and thirst. And then we must secure ourselves for the night. To-morrow we will determine what further to do."

In his company Fay knew no fear, as she frankly gave him her hand, and the pair walked across the beach to the forest indicated by Joe.

Our hero's prediction concerning the nature of the trees proved true. Almost all of them were cocoa-nut trees, and thickly covered with ripe fruit. The trunks of the trees, however, were so smooth and straight, and the branches so high up that all of Joe's essays to climb up the trunk proved fruitless.

"I'm afraid we'll have to go without supper!" said he, disappointedly.

Just then a troupe of monkeys, attracted by the unusual sight of human beings, swung themselves from the neighboring trees on to that which our hero had attempted to climb, and sat in the branches chattering and jabbering at them.

"I say, Joe," asked Fay, laughing at their curious antics, "couldn't you play ventriloquism on them? Perhaps they'll reward us with some cocoanuts."

"A good idea," exclaimed Joe, "I'll try it."

He had noticed that, like all troupes of wild monkeys, this one, had a leader—an old wizened chap, looking for all the world like a dried-up

Chinaman, whom the others obeyed with serf-like submission. He determined to stir up a rebellion and consequent fight, hoping that the animals would make use of the cocoa-nuts for weapons. When, therefore, the old monkey-chief chattered something which sounded like a command, he as near as possible reproduced the sounds, making them issue, in a contemptuous tone, from one of the frisky juveniles of the gang.

The effect was perceptible on the whole troupe. They immediately stopped chattering and gazed in dumb astonishment at the audacious youngster. The old monkey-chief chattered forth his displeasure, which was cleverly mocked by Joe, throwing the blame on several of the troupe.

Now be it known that, according to Naturalists, the ordinary state of society in monkeydom is that of a despotism. The chief demands and obtains implicit obedience and submission. In all the annals of the quadrumana such a thing as mocking their chosen head had not been heard of. Nothing but the immediate death of the original culprit could atone for the crime committed on the outraged dignity of the ancestor of our present monarchs.

The chief seized a handy cocoanut and flung it at the head of the frisky juvenile with such effect that the latter tumbled to the ground as though struck by lightning.

This act, however, was the signal for a general revolt.

The wounded quadrumana lay on the ground screeching with pain. His many friends in the troupe, mostly youngsters, espoused his cause, and, chattering like a lot of scolding women, fired a volley of cocoanuts at their chief, which the old fellow, however, neatly dodged. In his native tongue, he, like Richard III., called upon all who loved him to follow him, and a goodly number joined his ranks.

They were now ranged in two parties, and right manfully did they belabor each other with cocoanuts, so much so that Joe and Fay were obliged to seek shelter from the flying missiles.

For a time the pair watched the contest with amusement, but when the monkeys seemed to be determined to keep it up on that line all through the night Joe saw fit to put an end to the fight.

He uttered a loud roar like that of a lion, at the sound of which the monkeys hastily scampered off, leaving our hero in possession of the spoils.

None of the combatants had been sufficiently injured to be left behind except the frisky juvenile first hit.

The animal was sorely wounded in the head by the cocoanut, and had sustained some injuries by his fall from the tree, and was rendered quite tame by his suffering.

Fay gently stroked his skin, and gathering some green leaves placed them on the wounds, which seemed to have a soporific effect on the animal, for he soon fell asleep.

Meanwhile Joe had collected all the cocoanuts, which, as they amounted to over fifty, were sufficient for quite a number of meals.

Cracking a couple against each other, he and Fay drank the milk with great relish, and feasted on their meat. After having thus disposed of about half a dozen, their hunger was appeased, and they set about finding a secure spot in which to pass the night.

Though it was now quite late, yet in the dark vault of the skies the bright stars twinkled with a brilliancy unknown in northern skies, and together with the silvery beams of the full moon afforded a light almost equal to that of day itself.

After making quite a circuit, they returned to the place whence they had started without finding a suitable spot.

"Nothing remains," said Joe, "but to make a bed of leaves on the ground. You are still quite exhausted, and you can go to sleep. Have no fear, I shall keep wide awake and watch over you."

"But," asked she, "when will you sleep?"

"Oh, I ain't tired a bit," exclaimed he. "Besides I can sleep in the morning after you awake."

A soft bed of leaves was soon prepared, and Fay reclining herself upon it, soon sank into a deep slumber. True to his heart, Joe remained awake through all the hours of the night. Leaning against the trunk of the tree beside which was the improvised couch, he faithfully guarded his precious charge.

The solitude of the night was unbroken by a single sound, and just as daylight began to streak the eastern sky Joe succumbed to the influence about him, and still leaning against the tree sank into a gentle doze.

The hiss of a serpent awakened him with a start.

Oh, horror! Around the still sleeping form of Fay there coiled the folds of the cobra de capello, the most poisonous of snakes. As Joe started, it raised its head and shot at him a glance of defiance, its forked tongue issuing from its mouth,

and its deadly hiss freezing the very marrow in his bones.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE ABDUCTION.

WHAT to do? That was the momentous question.

Spell-bound, fascinated by the serpent's glittering eye, our hero gazed at the reptile winding its folds about the form of the dear girl. The beautiful tints that decked the serpent's skin danced before his eyes. In vain he struggled against the enchantment; he was powerless to resist its baleful influence. He tried to shriek aloud, but his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, his brain whirled, he seemed to be soaring in the air. A low moan escaped his lips, and he sank senseless to the ground.

The reptile, having thus by the power of its spell overcome its enemy, now began to play with its unconscious victim as the cat plays with the mouse between its claws.

It coiled itself up around Fay, then uncoiled itself again.

It softly glided over her bosom and entwined its slimy folds around her neck. It touched her face with its head as though kissing her before inflicting the fatal thrust.

A low rustling among the leaves stirred it from its playful humor. It now coiled its folds tightly around her body, then raised its head preparatory to fastening its poisonous fangs in her face.

At that moment a slender form sprang from the leafy bed, and with a loud shriek grabbed the reptile by the neck. It was the monkey whose wounds Fay had on the previous night so tenderly cared for. Whether it was gratitude for the act that prompted the animal, or whether reptiles are the natural enemies of the quadrumana, we know not.

The monkey clawed and bit; the snake tried to shake him off; but in vain, he clung to his enemy with a tenacious grip. The reptile uncoiled itself from the body of the unconscious girl and twisted its folds around the monkey. Thus they rolled around the ground still engaged in the deadly combat.

The shrieking of the monkey aroused Joe from his stupor.

He sprang to his feet, he saw that Fay was saved, but that her brute preserver was in deadly peril.

Rushing upon the reptile with his bowie-knife drawn, he with one blow cut off its head. The wriggling trunk twisted and turned and wriggled on the ground, the decapitated head hissed furiously, the glittering eyes scintillated with rage. These symptoms of life, however, soon ceased and the monster was dead.

Joe quickly awakened Fay, who learned with surprise the danger through which she had passed. Her sympathies were now more than ever awakened for her brute preserver.

The monkey lay on the ground near the body of the dead snake. A spasm, at intervals, convulsed his form, he was gasping for breath, the poisonous wounds inflicted by the reptile began to have their effect, his body swelled enormously and turned of a dark blue color, with tinted spots like those that were on the snake.

As Fay bent down to caress him he leaped convulsively into the air, then fell back a corpse. Faithful fellow, he had saved the girl's life at the cost of his own.

This incident more than ever determined Joe that very day to seek some more suitable spot for a temporary home.

Having carried the dead body of the monkey some distance into the forest, they dug for it a grave and covered it with leaves. Kind-hearted Fay dropped a tear to his memory.

The episode had a saddening effect on both, and they made a breakfast of cocoa-nuts in silence.

This being dispatched they wandered arm-in-arm through the dense forest, hardly knowing or caring whither they went. As they proceeded the vegetation became more and more luxuriant. Trees and bushes laden with delicious fruits of a kind that the European who has never been in that region must forever remain ignorant of.

They crossed a purling brook, whose water was clear and cool. Evidently they had no fear of hunger or thirst.

They wandered until midday, then, having partaken of a dinner of fruit, and rested themselves, they continued their march of exploration.

The woods began to grow lighter, stumps of trees which had been felled by axes were visible; they came upon a patch of ground that had once been tilled, though now it seemed abandoned and decayed.

"Surely," cried Joe, "these are all traces of

European culture; press on, we may find some settlement near at hand."

"Hark!" exclaimed Fay, suddenly, "I hear a human voice."

"It is Yacup's," cried Joe, "and singing, too. Thank Heaven that he was saved!"

"Listen," whispered Fay.

"For yer never miss der whisky till der jug runs dry."

They peeped through the thicket into an empty space beyond.

There were everywhere dilapidated vestiges of a former European settlement.

A few broken-down huts ranged themselves on one side of the clearing, farming utensils, old and rusty, lay scattered about in every direction.

All this our young couple saw at a glance; but what riveted their attention was the sight of Yacup sitting in the center of the open space.

He was clad in the fantastic garb of a buccaneer, although it was several sizes too large for him; he held a demijohn in his arm, of the contents whereof he had imbibed a considerable quantity. In fact, he was gloriously, hilariously intoxicated.

It was with difficulty that Joe and Fay could restrain their laughter, so as not to discover themselves.

"Now we'll have some rare fun," whispered Joe; "I'll play a little ventriloquism on him."

"But won't he find out the trick?" asked she; "he knows your secret."

"Oh, he'll never think of it," replied Joe; "besides, no doubt, he thinks us both dead and drowned."

Throwing his voice into the window of one of the huts, in a deep bass voice he exclaimed:

"Stop thief!"

"Who der deibel vas dat?" cried Yacup, springing up and gazing with dumb astonishment at the empty hovel.

"Bring back my clothes, you rascal," cried the voice.

Seeing no one appearing, Yacup screwed up courage and replied:

"Vy der deuce don't you come and get them."

"I can't, you scoundrel, you know I'm naked."

"Vell, vat's der odds, der vas no one here to see you."

"Ain't there, my hearty," exclaimed Joe, in a sailor's voice from the opposite thicket; "that's where you are mistaken."

"Vell, by grashus," exclaimed Yacup, turning around in bewilderment, "I done thought dere vas nobody on dis infernal place."

"Oh, there's lots of us," continued the sailor voice, "and if you don't take off those clothes you've stolen mighty quick, you'll catch it."

"Ain't you bringing my clothes yet?" exclaimed the first voice from the window.

"Vat vill I wear ven I takes dem off," said Yacup, despairingly. "Mine clothes vas all torn to pieces by dem waves."

"Come, come, my hearty," continued the sailor voice, "off with your pirate's rig, lower your false colors."

Not knowing what to do, Yacup mechanically began undressing himself. He was about to take off his pantaloons when the voice from the window exclaimed:

"No matter, youngster, you may put on your clothes again. I've just found another suit, and I'll let you off this time."

"Vell, vy der deuce didn't you say so right away?" grumbled Yacup, dressing himself again.

"But I won't let you off," cried the sailor voice. "What have you done with your companions, what have you done with Joe and Fay?"

"Poor Joe, poor Fay," sighed Yacup, "dey vas both drowned."

"You lie," shouted the invisible sailor, "you murdered them."

"Vat, I—I murdered dem," cried Yacup, indignantly; "dey vas mine best friends, und I gives all I got, I gives dis bottle unt der whisky, ven dey be's alive. I murdered dem, no, no, I'm not so bad as dat."

And burying his face in his hands the poor boy burst into tears.

Both Joe and Fay were deeply affected by this touch of true friendship, but our hero continued, still using the sailor's voice:

"You're lying, you murdered them, and here come their ghosts to haunt you."

Then issuing from the copse, Joe and Fay, almost bursting with the desire of laughter, marched towards him with slow and measured tread.

As soon as Yacup beheld them he uttered a cry of wild terror, his hair stood upright on his head, and, sinking on his knees, he exclaimed:

"Oh, please mister and miss ghost, don't hurt a poor boy like me."

"Why, Yacup, what's the matter?" cried Joe, in a tone of affected surprise; "are you drunk? Fay and I were saved, and we thought you lost."

We are glad to find you alive, and surely you ought to be so."

"Vat," cried Yacup, clutching him and Fay, "you are no ghosts, you are flesh and blood; vell, I be tam, this island is bewitched."

"Why, Yacup," asked Fay, merrily, "can't you guess who was fooling you?"

The boy looked alternately on the smiling faces of our hero and heroine. At last the truth broke upon him. A broad grin overspread his features, and, after indulging in a hearty laugh, he exclaimed:

"Vy, vat a fool I vas; it was Joe all der time."

We will pass rapidly over the next few weeks.

The settlement was no doubt a rendezvous for the buccaneers who preyed upon passing vessels, but for some reason had been abandoned. Sufficient articles of furniture were found to furnish one of the huts comfortably. Guns and ammunition were also found, and a well of pure water had been dug near at hand. The hut that was their home contained several apartments, one of which was Fay's exclusive boudoir, in another they dined, while the third afforded a sleeping-place for Joe and Yacup.

Fruit was abundant and game was plenty, and as their solitude was uninterrupted either by man or beast, they settled down into quiet homelike life, until deliverance in the shape of a vessel should appear.

Joe and Yacup alternately went hunting, leaving the other to protect Fay and the homestead.

One evening as Joe, tired out by a long day's hunt, and laden with game, retraced his steps to the hut, a column of smoke reached him from afar. Filled with apprehension, he hastened his footsteps, only to discover on his arrival that the settlement was on fire, and Yacup, gagged and helpless, was bound to a tree.

With his knife he cut the thongs that bound the boy, and agonizingly asked:

"Where, where is Fay?"

"Carried off by the savages!" sorrowfully answered Yacup.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SNEAKING BOB'S REVENGE.

"Impossible," cried Joe.

"Well," continued Yacup, "I don't know how it vas, but shust as Fay und I vas eating dinner der black niggers comes rushing into der hut mit a white boy in der front."

"A white boy," exclaimed Joe.

"Yas; der boy vat gives you away on der school-ship."

"Sneaking Bob?"

"Der same old rascal."

"How could he be here?"

"I don't know, but here he vas, dat's certain. He knocked me on der head mit a club, und der boy takes up Fay und runs away mit her. Den dey drinks all our whisky und puts der hut on fire. It vas good der flames went out und dey is only smoking now, or else I vud be all burned to dead."

"Luckily we have guns and ammunition left," said our hero; "come on, Yacup, we will follow their trail and rescue her or share her fate."

The savages had taken no particular care to hide their footsteps, and the two immediately started off in the right direction.

Yacup had truly said that Sneaking Bob was the leader in the nefarious expedition. After having so shamefully betrayed our hero to the captain's wrath, he was exposed to the just indignation of the rest of the boys, and being too cowardly to oppose them, he, one night, with Ben Bottle and a few more congenial spirits, deserted from the vessel. They suffered many hardships, under which all except him succumbed; and when he was the only survivor he was picked up in a dying condition by the crew of a buccaneer. Being restored to health he made himself a favorite with his new companions, who subsequently landed on this coast and occupied the settlement our hero found deserted, and which, indeed, was their home when on land.

After a short stay the pirates started on a new depredating expedition, but Bob, disliking to accompany them, kept himself concealed in the forests until they were gone. He was now the sole occupant and master of the settlement, and had a good time until he awoke one morning to find the settlement overrun by savages.

Fortunately several of them had learned a smattering of English from the missionaries that had been among them, and Bob managed to make an arrangement with them by which they could ransack the settlement, on the condition that they would take him with them and allow him to remain with the tribe unharmed.

Bob thus became a member of a savage horde, and, being by nature as brutal as the most de-

praved among them, he found himself quite in his element.

He frequently made descents upon the settlements—of which there were several in the vicinity—and, renegade as he was, delighted in the tortures inflicted by the savages on their victims.

It was thus that, with a band of blood-thirsty savages, he surprised Fay and Yacup, and, having bound the latter, as before described, made the former a captive.

Fay was frightened unto death as she was forced to walk between two brawny savages with upraised clubs, threatening at the slightest show of resistance to dash out her brains.

She did not utter one word of complaint, but, foot-sore and weary, trudged many a mile through the dense forest with her captors.

It was dead of night when the party reached the camp of the savages.

About a score of rude huts, constructed mostly of mud and earth, were erected beneath the trees. Around these huts clustered in various groups the semi-nude horde of men, women and children.

Though the weather was quite hot, a number of fires had been built in several places, at which to cook their evening meal.

As the victorious party appeared they were hailed by the tribe with wild yells and unearthly shrieks, which filled Fay with terror.

In accordance with Bob's order, the brawny savages who held Fay brought her into a mud hut, which stood a little apart from the rest, and was a little more imposing in appearance.

It was the residence of the chief of the tribe.

He was an old bleary-eyed negro, whose shrunken skin hung loosely on his form; he was dirty and filthy in appearance, and lazily stretched himself on a lion's skin, which lay on the ground.

As the party, headed by Bob, entered the hut, he half raised himself up and looked inquiringly at them, without, however, saying a word.

Bob knelt on the ground and kissed the hem of his dirty garment, a ceremony followed by all the other savages.

"Great and glorious chief," exclaimed Bob, in English, a language which he knew the former understood, "the moon was full when first I arrived in the tribe; since then it waned until it was no more, and then it grew until now it is full again. You have made me one of yours; I have lived with you, and learnt you the use of fire-arms, and how to surprise and slaughter the white people who come to rob you of your young men and women, and sell them as slaves to their brethren in the land of the setting sun. Say is it not so?"

"It is," grunted the chief.

"I am young," continued Bob, "not yet eighteen; but as I grow older I will become a great chief among you. Your young men shall be my brothers. When I go with them to fight the white people I will forget I am white; I will think my skin is black, like those of my brothers."

These remarks seemed to please the old chief highly, for he gave a grunt of pleasure.

"But," added Bob, "there is one thing I cannot do; I cannot marry a female of your tribe. I had been here but a week when you told me to take a wife from among the dark beauties; then I hesitatingly answered you that I was too young. You were displeased with me, and replied that among the tribe there were young men younger than I who were married; that a young man could never be a chief until he was a husband. I have treasured up your words. I have captured a lot of booty and the white maiden who stands before you. The booty is yours, let the maiden be mine?"

He bent low before the sable dignitary, and humbly awaited his answer.

The chief arose, and throwing the robe which had formed his couch over his shoulders, responded:

"Your words have been music in my ears. Our tribe is strong and powerful, but the white people are tricky and cunning. We can overcome them by our strength, but they defeat us by their stratagem. We need a white man's help, one who will be faithful to us, and learn us the tricks the white man uses. Such a one I believe you are. You deserve a reward. The maiden shall be your wife if she desires to, if not, she shall be your slave. Lead her hence to your cabin."

Words fail to depict the effect of this speech on Fay.

Poor girl, she was still too young to understand all the horrible meaning conveyed therein, but the little that entered her dazed brain was sufficient to fill her mind with consternation.

Wildly she threw herself on her knees before the chief, and clasping him around the knee exclaimed:

"Oh do not send me with him, do not force me to become his wife. I am but a young girl, I am but a child, I do not want to marry, oh have

mercy on me, pity me, let me return to the settlement, let me go back from where I was stolen by him."

"Maiden," answered the chief, "the spoils of war belong to the victor. He has captured you, he is your master, you are his slave. That he wants to make you his wife is an honor, of which you ought to be proud."

"But," begged she, "I am so young, I am but fifteen years of age."

"There are girls among us," replied he, "who are mothers at that age. But I have spoken enough, lead her hence."

Fay screamed and held on to the chief's leg. It was with brute force that they tore her away and bodily carried her to the hut which had been assigned to Bob.

There they rudely flung her on a couch of furs and left her alone with her captor.

"So, so, my girl," said he. "You're in my power now. Pray what is your pretty name?"

"Fay Templeton," answered she doggedly.

"Fay!" exclaimed he, "that's the same as fairy. Well, my fairy, how do you happen to be in this outlandish place?"

"I and my companions," replied she, "were cast ashore."

"Your companions," ejaculated he, "have you another besides the boy we bound?"

"I have."

"And he is?"

"Joe Dodger."

"Joe Dodger," cried Sneaking Bob, fiendishly.

"Ah, ah, he is my old enemy, and I have triumphed over him."

## CHAPTER XII.

### ON THE TRAIL.

"Why do you hate him?" asked Fay, pleadingly. "What has he done to you? He cannot have harmed you. He is so good, so noble-hearted, so generous."

"Ay, that is it," hissed Bob. "At school he was always the favorite among his companions—their leader, their very king. I could not win the popularity he enjoyed, and therefore became jealous of him and hated him for it. I sought to harm him in every way, and once when he suspected my agency in the matter he struck me to the earth with his fist. I have never forgotten that blow; it burns on my cheek even now. Oh, he has already suffered for it; but that is nothing to what he shall endure. I'll have his life yet—I'll have his life."

The boy, for he was hardly more, stamped his foot and clenched his fist with rage; he frothed at the mouth, his eyes became bloodshot and rolling. Thus convulsed with passion, he seemed more like a fiend than a human person.

Fay shuddered as she gazed upon him and thought how utterly she was in his power.

"You love him," continued he, savagely. "Nay, do not deny it—do not say you are a child, and know not what is love. Boy that I am, I feel the master passion away my bosom, and from the moment my eyes fell upon you I loved you. That passion opens my senses—though you yourself do not know it, yet I can see by your eyes, your manner, your whole self that you are in love, and with Joe Dodger, my enemy. He has rescued your life, he has cared for and protected you, he hopes when he becomes a man to make you his wife. No, no, that shall never be. I would first torture you to death."

"You ought to be ashamed to speak to me thus," replied Fay, a vivid flush mantling her countenance. "If you are a gentleman, you will go away and leave me alone in my sorrow."

"Fay," cried Bob, trembling with excitement, "I go; I leave you sole mistress of this hut. You can sleep in peace to-night. Attempt not to escape, for flight is in vain. I shall guard the entrance to this hut; no one, not even myself, shall enter; I give you time to reflect upon your position. When to-morrow's sun sinks behind the brow of yonder mountains, I shall return to you and ask you to become my wife. If you consent, it is well; if you refuse, then—"

He left the hut without finishing his threat, leaving it to the excited imagination of the helpless captive to deck it with mysterious horror.

Joe and Yacup, rifle in hand, followed the trail through the forest. Neither of them spoke a word, but silent as shadows they flitted along, bent on their holy mission.

It was not long before they came in sight of the encampment. Crouching on the ground and peering between the grass, they could see the group of savages surrounding the camp-fires; the hum of many voices struck their ears. They remained on the ground, in order to take observations.

The ruddy glow of the camp-fires enabled them



[illegible]

The awe-struck savage aimed at thought he was killed and promptly fell to the ground.

Yacup dispatched him with a spear hastily picked up from the ground.

Joe and Yacup repeated this performance until a dozen of the Wahnohi's had bitten the dust.

In vain Bob tried to arouse the drunken spirit of his band.

They moved neither hand nor limb, and every time Joe leveled at an enemy and ventriloquized a report the latter would instantaneously drop and allow himself to be killed by Yacup without the least resistance.

At length, with a great cry, the Wahnohi's recovered from their stupor, and throwing their weapons away, turned their backs to the foe and fled from the spot as fast as their legs would carry them.

Bob was only too glad to follow their example.

Joe and Yacup now reloaded their guns and gave the flying enemy another dose which stretched two more of their number on the ground.

"Warriors of Amari," exclaimed the voice of the great spirit, "rejoice, the battle is won. The Wahnohi are vanquished."

Ventriloquism had gained the day.

## CHAPTER XV.

### OFF FOR HOME.

SUCH a shout of exultation arose from the throats of the victorious Amari was probably never before heard in that region.

They danced and sung and shouted, some fell on their knees and worshiped Joe, others kissed the hem of his garments, his hands, his very feet. They were wild with joy.

After the first outburst was over Joe ordered them to start in pursuit of the fleeing enemy.

A quick march of several hundred yards brought them to the hostile encampment. But it was deserted. The Wahnohi's, filled with superstitious dread, had vanished, leaving all their valuables behind, which of course became the booty of the conquering tribe.

Tents formed of the skins of wild animals, valuable furs, numerous trinkets, barbaric armor, all this was seized upon.

The prizes of war were equally divided among the men, our hero and Yacup retaining nothing for themselves.

While foraging through the camp they came upon an elephant tightly fastened to some large trees, which had belonged to the chief, but had been left behind in the hurry of retreat.

The animal was perfectly tame and docile, and our hero could not resist the temptation of getting astride of its back. Yacup, also, mounted and seated himself behind Joe.

The huge animal was freed from its bonds, and guided by its ruler, majestically strode through the encampment amidst the loud applause of the elated savages.

The booty having been secured, Joe gave the order to march back to the tribe, and he and Yacup, on the back of the elephant, headed the line.

They marched all day, rested the succeeding night in the forest and recommenced their march at daybreak.

As they neared the encampment of the Amari, fleet-footed couriers were dispatched in advance to inform the tribe of the victory which had been achieved, and of the approach of the conquering heroes.

The sun was setting in the western sky when the triumphal procession entered the village.

The entire tribe was assembled to meet them; at their head stood the old ex-chief and Fay.

From his eminence our hero looked down upon the admiring throng with a flush of pardonable pride.

He guided the elephant into the center of the open space which was the common meeting-house of the Amari.

Then he and Yacup alighted.

Fay ran eagerly forward to meet them.

"Oh," cried she, grasping their hands. "I'm so glad you both have returned safe and sound. I felt extremely worried while you were away. Had either of you perished I would have died for grief."

"There was no danger," answered Yacup. "I am not a fool, and I know my own strength. I am not a fool, and I know my own strength. I am not a fool, and I know my own strength."

And Yacup, with a heavy laugh at the side of the old chief, said:

Joe told her all about that, and she also joined in the laugh.

"Joe," said she, "as long as you keep your skill in ventriloquism a secret, the tribe will worship you as a deity."

The old chief now approached them, and addressing Joe respectfully, said:

"Young chief of the Amari; I have learned from those who were with you in the battle, that to you belongs the honor of victory. You have called upon the great spirit to aid you in the battle, and he answered your request. Great glory is yours. This night the tribe will celebrate the victory with song and dance. Behold, a throne has been raised for you to occupy. The fair maiden can sit beside you. Do us the honor to ascend and witness the festivity."

The throne indicated was a rude structure formed of the trunks of hewn trees over which, however, had been thrown some of the furs captured from the enemy, which gave it quite a luxurious appearance. When our hero and heroine were seated on this elevation the sports of the evening were begun. The old chief was master of ceremonies, and the participants in the entertainment obeyed his directions.

First came the hideous noise yeelp music, played by the band on the metallic plates before described. Then the dusky African maids performed a dance which resembled mostly the contortions of a group of gymnasts.

Following this was a sham fight which was intended to be a repetition of the victory they had just scored.

Solos were sung by various members of the tribe, more remarkable for loudness than for melody. Yacup was induced to sing a song of his Fatherland in high German, which as it was not understood by a single one of his auditors, Joe and Fay included, merited and received tumultuous applause.

The entertainment becoming somewhat monotonous our hero conceived the idea of creating some fun on his own account.

When, therefore the singing was at its height he cleverly imitated the roar of the elephant and at the same time raised the cry of "elephant loose."

Then was a mighty scattering of the tribe, all rushed off in different directions fearful of being ground to powder beneath the animal's massive legs. Some, however, in their fright ran to the spot where the elephant stood bound, quietly masticating some young twigs and gazing at them in a mild, benevolent manner.

These assured the rest of the tribe that it was a false alarm and induced all to return to the scene of the entertainment. Our young friends who had seen the trick, heartily enjoyed the fright of the savages. The singing and dancing now became quite promiscuous and general, and again Joe started a little trick.

Taking a handful of powder from his flask he descended from his throne, and without any one noticing it, he placed it on the ground near to the old chief.

Then he whispered to Yacup and re-ascended the throne. Yacup touched off the powder. A bright flash suddenly arose followed by a dense cloud of smoke.

The old chief sprang into the air as if shot from the mouth of a cannon. The whole tribe fell prostrate on their faces expecting the outbreak of a volcano in their midst. All this was extremely ludicrous to our three friends, and, as it passed off harmlessly, was a source of exceeding enjoyment to them.

The savages, however, unable to account for the flame, thought it best to break up the entertainment, a proceeding ardently desired by Joe, who was very fatigued and worn out by the exertion of the previous days.

Half an hour later all the inhabitants of the village were sound asleep.

We rapidly pass over succeeding months. Indeed a year had elapsed since the three outcasts had been cast by the waves on the coast of Africa. During that time Joe maintained his ascendancy over the tribe, and he, as well as Fay and Yacup, had nothing left to desire but a sight of the civilized world.

They, however, longed to be again among the habitations of people of their own complexion, and had made several journeys to the sea-shore in the hope of attracting the attention of some passing vessel.

For this purpose they had also reared a pole, on which was fastened the white flag of distress. The savages knew their object in so doing, but though they earnestly desired to have Joe live among them forever, yet so much did they dread his secret power that they dared not oppose his desires.

Their patient watching was at last rewarded by the sight of a vessel. Oh, how eagerly did they strain their eyes in gazing at the ship, which could bear them homeward; how their voices in loud appeals; how their hearts throbbed lest it should disappear from sight; how they fairly screamed with delight as they saw the vessel lower anchor and a row-boat filled with a por-

tion of the crew row to the very spot where they were standing.

The minutes that elapsed before the boat touched the shore seemed like hours to them. When finally the crew landed Joe and Yacup fairly clasped them in their embrace, exclaiming:

"Saved! saved! saved!"

Fay, though less demonstrative, was equally excited.

"*Jene vous comprends pas,*" answered one of the sailors, disengaging himself from our hero's embrace.

"*Vous etes francaise?*" asked Joe, who had learned the language at school and spoke it fluently.

"I am," replied the sailor in his native tongue. "Our ship is the *Bonhomme*, and we came here to get some cocoa-nuts. We are surprised to see you. How came you here with your companions?"

Joe explained, and then asked:

"Whither are you bound?"

"To Havre."

"And you will take us along?"

"The captain will have no objection," replied the sailor. "I am only mate, but come on board with me and tell the captain your story. I have no doubt he will take you on board."

"Thank Heaven," exclaimed Joe fervently. "Our exile is over. We shall depart from this foreign shore. We shall leave, and forever. Come, Fay, we will prepare for the voyage, and then we will be off for home."

## CHAPTER XVI.

### JOE'S FAREWELL TO THE TRIBE.

FAY naturally spoke French as fluently as she did English. Indeed, the language had been almost the exclusive medium of intercourse between her parents, and her mother had addressed her in no other tongue. She, therefore, was enabled to keep up quite a continued conversation with the French sailors.

To Yacup, however, French was Greek. He listened to their talk, of which he did not understand a word, with a curious expression on his face, and at last broke forth:

"By tam, you jabber und jabber like von pair of geese. Vy don't you talk United States, so dat a feller can put in a word, too?"

"No matter, Yacup," said Fay, smiling; "you beat us all in German, you know."

"Dot vos so," cried he, "und I shust show you how it sounds."

And he began to rattle off several sentences in high German, much to his own and others' enjoyment.

"Sir," said Joe to the mate, "at present we dwell with a hostile tribe of savages, named the Amari. By certain means, I will not now explain, I have been elevated to the position of chief. They would grieve at my departure, and your appearance among them would be the signal of hostility towards you, and perhaps towards me and my companions. The thing must be managed with tact. Fortunately none of the savages have beheld the approach of the ship or the boat. Come with me, and when near the camp secrete yourselves in the woods. When you are summoned, though the manner of the summons may surprise you, advance and stand before me."

These remarks filled the mate with some suspicions.

"Pardon me, my dear boy," said he, "I hardly know you, and you yourself admit that you are the chief of a hostile tribe of savages. Are you not leading us into a snare? Well, you gave us your word as a Christian that you will not deliver us up to the savages to be killed and perhaps eaten?"

"I pledge you my life," said our hero, earnestly.

"But," continued the mate, his doubts not being all dispelled, "why do you want to go back to the tribe, why can you not with your companions return to the ship at once?"

"There are several reasons therefor. First, I would depart with dignity and honor from those who, though savages, have treated us kindly and with every mark of respect; then there are several objects at the camp I desire to take along with us, not the least of which is a live elephant, which I gained as a trophy of war with a neighboring tribe. And, besides, if the matter is rightly arranged, the tribe will voluntarily present you with more cocoanuts than you could gather unmolested."

"You can repose the utmost faith in Joe," added Fay: "he is a noble boy and would not break his word to any one."

"Mademoiselle," replied the mate, gallantly, "there is no other certificate of honor than that which a beautiful young lady like you can give."





No, indeed! To-morrow's sun will rise on his corpse, and you—you will be mine!"

## CHAPTER XIX.

### REGAINED.

NIGHT brooded over the surface of the water. The pirates had broken into the store-room, where there was quite a cargo of whisky, and poured the vile stuff down their throats.

All, including the pirate chief, became beastly drunk.

They sang, and danced, and shouted.

In her confinement in the cabin Fay heard the reveling and shuddered at her fate and that of the prisoners in the hold.

The pirates ceased not their carousals until almost all of them were stretched in a drunken stupor on the deck.

Sneaking Bob had joined in the convivialities, but had imbibed only enough to make him boisterous and pugnacious.

He was in that condition in which he would have braved the very devil, and could not resist the temptation to vent his drunken spleen on his captured enemy.

With reeling steps he stumbled towards the hold and lifted the latches that covered their impromptu prison.

All was dark below. It was fully twenty feet from the deck to the floor of the hold.

He stretched himself flat on the deck and bent over the opening.

"Hello there, Joe!" cried he.

"Hello yourself, Sneaking Bob," answered our hero, defiantly.

"Young scoundrel," he roared, "I'll teach the drunken young rascal."

"We'll see about that," replied Joe.

"By hades!" shouted Bob, "if I had a pistol with me I'd blow your brains out."

"You'd whistle another tune if I were on deck with you, you cowardly scoundrel."

"Oh, oh; you are mad, are you?" taunted Bob. "I wouldn't like to be in your skin for all the world. Do you know what's going to happen to you in the morning?"

"What?"

"You're going to be shot like a dog. And do you know what I'm going to do with Fay?"

"Oh, villain!"

"She's going to be mine, ah, ah, mine, mine."

He fairly shrieked the last words in fiendish glee. The ship just then gave a lurch, and Bob, too drunk to steady himself, lost his balance and toppled down headlong into the midst of the captives. Before he could rise Joe sprang upon him and clutched him by the throat.

"She'll be yours, will she?" exclaimed he, tightening his grasp. "What's to prevent me from strangling you? I'll be shot like a dog, will I? By Heavens, I'll wring your neck like a cat."

"Oh, mercy, Joe," gurgled the young rascal.

"You're—you're choking me."

"Do you deserve a better fate?" cried our hero, maintaining his hold upon the other's throat.

"Forbear, Joe," interposed the captain. "Though he merits death do not murder him. It was kind Providence that caused him to tumble into our midst; see, the hold is open, we can escape and perhaps regain the ship."

At the request of the captain Joe flung the crest-fallen Bob into a corner of the hold, exclaiming:

"You can thank the captain that I refrain from taking your miserable life."

"Dot vas all right," said Yacup, "not to kills him, bud, by tam, I vill bind him mit a rope on the wall und feets so dot he not plays us some older tricks."

A rope was soon found in the hold, and Yacup firmly bound Bob, and besides stuffing his handkerchief in his mouth by way of a gag.

"Now, what say you, Joe?" asked Yacup. "I thought you was a brave man."

The pirates then retired to their quarters, leaving Joe and Fay alone in the hold.

Joe looked at Fay, and she looked at him, and they both smiled.

Joe then told Fay of his escape, and she told him of her own. They both laughed heartily at the adventures of the night.

To prevent discovery it was resolved that Joe should remain in the hold with Bob, who was bound to him.

Joe then took out a small box which he had hidden in his pocket, and opened it.

Inside the box were a few pieces of gold, which he had won from the pirates.

Joe then took out a small bottle of perfume, and opened it.

The perfume was of a very fine quality, and Joe had bought it for Fay.

chance of climbing up the sides of the chamber. Yacup, however, struck upon a plan.

"Ven I was in Yarmany," explained he, "I vent in dot turning school where they teach vot you call dot gymnashtics. Vell, dere ve used to build pyramids. Dot is three or four shtand on der ground, den two shtand on der shoulders von der odders, and von on der shoulders von odder two. By gar ve build him forty, fifty feet high."

This plan was immediately adopted. The captain and two sailors stood upright on the bottom of the hold, Pat and Mike, after several collapses, managed to sustain themselves on the shoulders of the three, then Joe, with the agility of an acrobat, clambered on the shoulders of the two Irishmen.

He could now just touch the deck with his hands. He cautiously drew himself up and peered out on the deck.

"The field is clear," whispered he, to those below, "there's no one in sight."

He then silently emerged from the hold and stood on the deck. Until now the sky had been covered by clouds, but the full moon broke through a rift and illuminated the deck for some distance ahead.

Cautiously our hero crept along. The silence was oppressive. Not a sound was heard, he seemed to be traversing the deck of a phantom ship. The mystery was explained when he reached the forward portion of the vessel.

There, stretched on the ground, snoring loudly, sunk in intoxicating sleep, lay the drunken pirates.

Noiselessly he bent over them, and one by one removed their knives and pistols, leaving them totally unarmed.

Having accomplished this, he turned to the captain's cabin to inform Fay of his liberty, and to reassure her by his presence.

The feeble light of a candle streamed through a narrow window, and to this window Joe softly crept and peered within.

There, on the cabin floor, knelt the beautiful girl. Her back was turned towards the window, her hands were clasped in prayer, her eyes were raised towards heaven.

"Almighty Father," prayed she, "if that Thou wilt harken to me, preserve Joe from the horrible fate now threatening. He has saved my life, and let my humble prayers win Thy aid to save his."

Joe was deeply affected as he heard this humble appeal to heaven. In a low sweet tone of voice he softly sang a song taught him by Fay, and which the two had often sang together as they strolled along the beach.

As the well-known notes struck her ear she paused in her prayer and listened attentively. A glad smile overspread her countenance, and she sprang to her feet.

"'Tis he," exclaimed she, "'tis Joe."

She rushed to her cabin-door, hastily unlocked it and appeared on the deck.

Joe was about to clasp her in his arms when she recoiled with a shriek. From his clothes she thought it was Bob.

"Oh, what a bitter disappointment," cried she, turning to re-enter the cabin.

Joe caught her by the wrist.

"Unhand me, villain," exclaimed she, "I am armed, see; I have a dagger; unhand me or I'll stab you to the heart."

She drew a dagger from her bosom and raised her hand to strike.

"What, Fay," cried Joe in amazement.

"Joe," joyfully exclaimed she, dropping the weapon, and rushing into his embrace, "I thought you were Bob."

"My dress misled," said he, gently, leading her into the cabin. "I have turned the tables on Bob, I am free and he is a prisoner."

He related what had occurred.

"And now, dear Fay," continued he, "remain here in peace. I shall clear the ship of the pirates and rescue our friends."

Bidding her a tender farewell, he left the cabin and proceeded on the deck.

Letting a little vain-glorious he had indeed conceived the idea of outwitting the pirates alone and unaided.

He went directly to the elephant's pen. The animal recognized its master with a joyful exclamation. Patting the beast on its head, he took off the chain that was bound around one of its feet, and led the animal out of the pen. Then he got on its back. Catching hold of the elephant's huge ears for want of a better bridle, he urged it forward.

The intelligent animal appeared to know what was desired of it, for it with low and solemn tread, strode on the deck to where lay the drunken pirates.

It paused before their outstretched bodies, but did not touch them.

Then, with a low groan, it raised its massive legs and placed it on the

back of a pirate before it. A low groan issued from the victim's lips, as the breath of life was pressed out of his body.

The elephant strode forward. At every step a pirate surrendered the ghost.

Pale and breathless, yet determined and irresistible as fate, Joe guided the steps of the gigantic executioner. In less than an hour all was over, every pirate was a corpse.

"It was a terrible thing," muttered Joe, "but there was no other choice. Either our lives or theirs."

He guided the elephant back to his pen and left it serenely munching a load of hay as if the fearful deeds it had just performed had no weight upon its conscience at least.

Next Joe took up a long rope and proceeded to the hold where his companions were anxiously awaiting him. He lowered the rope, and one by one clambered up and stood on deck.

"Well?" asked the captain.

"The ship is ours," triumphantly exclaimed our hero.

"And the pirates?"

"Are dead."

"Dead?"

"Behold."

The full moon cast its silvery beams on the ghastly faces of the lifeless, mangled bodies of the pirates stretched out on the deck.

It was, indeed, a fearful sight.

## CHAPTER XX.

### AN INTERRUPTED CEREMONY.

FOR some moments the captain and his companions gazed at the fearful havoc caused by the elephant in mute astonishment. Then the captain turned towards Joe and said:

"You have performed a deed from which firmer hearts than yours would have shrunk. Doubtless the souls of these wretches were black with murder, theft and all the wickedness imaginable, yet their fate was terrible. Perhaps had you summoned us we might have regained possession of the ship without sacrificing their lives."

"If, sir," replied our hero, "they would have slept off their stupor, even though they would awaken to find themselves in chains, yet through their overwhelming numbers they might still have found the means of overpowering and slaughtering us."

"The deed is done," said the captain, "and further argument concerning it is fruitless. See that the bodies are cast overboard, the decks washed, and everything restored to its proper shape."

This was done during the night, and when the next day the sun rose bright and clear, all traces of what had happened were gone; the ship, neat and trim, was gayly bounding over the waves towards its destination.

No incident worthy of note occurred on the further voyage of the vessel, and before many weeks had elapsed, the *Bon Homme* entered the port of Havre and cast anchor at the quay.

The company that owned the ship had their office at this seaport, and Joe was introduced to its president by the captain, who gave a glowing account of the encounter with the pirate and our hero's achievement.

This came to the notice of the press, and for several days in succession the papers were full of sensational reports about the matter.

Joe became the hero of the hour; crowds flocked on board the ship to behold the wonderful elephant.

The result was that the agent of the Zoological Gardens at Paris made Joe a proposition. Offer for the animal, and through our hero was taken to part with his magnificent pet, yet as he could not well keep it with him in his travels, and as he needed the money offered for his present uses, and for the use of Fay and Yacup, who were dependent upon him, he finally sold the animal, which was immediately shipped off to Paris.

As for Bob, he was handed over to the authorities for complicity in the piracy, and they in turn handed him over to the American consul, who kept him in close confinement until he should find means to ship him to America for trial.

The captain of the *Bon Homme*, when on land, resided at Paris, where he had a family, and upon his solicitation our three friends accompanied him for a short trip to that gay capital.

Arrived at Paris they made the captain's house their home, and determined to spend the time they remained in the city in visiting whatever was worth seeing.

One evening the whole party, including the captain and his wife, took a private box at the Grand Opera.

During the first act Joe, to whom the spectacle

was a novelty, remained quiet, watching the performance; but after that it came into his head to give the audience an entertainment not put down in the bills.

Urging those with him not to betray him by immediate laughter, he began his operations.

The prima-donna had just concluded a beautiful aria, and the whole house was still ringing with applause, when, from the center of the parquet, a clear, ringing hiss was heard.

Now, it was well known in Paris that the prima-donna had a rival whom she had displaced in the affections of the audience, and every one immediately believed that the expression of disapproval was a machination of their favorite's rival.

They therefore broke forth into a tremendous burst of applause, which, however, was followed again by that suspicious hiss.

The audience now sprang to their feet, wildly shouting.

A venerable old man who was just then wiping his bald head with his handkerchief was fastened upon as the author of the mischief.

"Put him out, put him out," shouted several among the audience, shaking their fists at the harmless old man.

An usher tapped him on the shoulder and significantly pointed to the door.

"Sir," cried the innocent man, highly indignant, "it was not I. I won't go out. I've paid for my seat, and have a right to keep it."

"Put him out, put him out," cried the excited audience.

The usher saw that, right or wrong, he would have to obey the imperious mandate, if quiet should ever be restored so that the performance could continue.

So seizing the old man he hustled him out of the theater in spite of his protests, amid the tumultuous applause of the audience.

To show their appreciation of the prima-donna the audience demanded an encore of the song which had called forth the demonstration.

It was gracefully given, and as no hissing followed the applause, the house gradually settled down to its former decorum.

The inmates of the box highly enjoyed the sport, but Fay expressed her pity that the old man had been so roughly treated on account of our hero's trick.

"No matter," cried the captain, almost bursting with laughter, "it serves him right. I know him well. He's an old sinner that only comes here to see the ballet that follows the opera."

As the captain had intimated, a ballet was performed after the opera was over, and soon the stage was filled with airy-costumed fairies.

"Now shush! look at dot codger," exclaimed Yacup, "who sits in dot box opposite us. He is ogling mit dem ballet girls all dot time."

"Oh, I'll fix him for that," said Joe.

"For Heaven's sake, don't!" exclaimed the captain; "that's the Emperor Napoleon."

"And what's the Emperor Napoleon to me?" cried Joe, with true American independence. Then sending his voice so as to make it appear as if coming from the gods in the gallery, he shouted:

"Mind your eyes, Napy—mind your eyes, or I'll tell Eugenie!"

This of course was uttered in French, and its effect was immense on the audience. They suspected a radical plot, and as their sympathies were about evenly divided, the air was filled with shouts of:

"Vive l'Empereur! Vive la Republique!"

"Now you've fixed it!" exclaimed the captain.

Joe capped the climax of the disturbance by raising the "Marseillaise"—which was then forbidden to be sung at Paris—right in the midst of the parterre, where it was supposed all were supporters of the empire.

The audience were dumfounded. Which was friend, which was foe? The gallery, glad to give expression to their sentiments, took up the burden of the song, and such a chorus was never heard within those walls before.

In the midst of the confusion the captain, fearful lest by some mischance our hero's complicity in the row might be discovered, hastened to the door of the opera-house.

The next day the papers gave a varied account of the occurrence, according to their political sympathies, each party charging the other with having created the disturbance. This produced a bitter newspaper war, which waged for many weeks, and as the affair had no more serious result, the flaming accounts were a source of supreme enjoyment to the captain and his party.

After the captain's wife, several days after the above occurrence, "I now would like to witness a grand wedding at Notre Dame."

"I should like to see the famous church above

all things," replied Fay, "and especially at the event of a wedding. Who are the bridal couple?"

"The groom is Marquis de la Rue, an old nobleman; the bride is Madame de Lavigne. I slightly know the bride. She's a widow lady, whose husband has been dead over ten years; I believe she's forty, but she is still beautiful, and looks no older than thirty. Why, she has a son by her first marriage who is about a year younger than Joe. How she comes to marry the marquis is a very romantic story. There comes the captain with Joe and Yacup. I'll tell you the story some time when we will not be interrupted, for it is a long one."

The others now entered the room and it was agreed to go to "Notre Dame," to be present at the marriage which was to take place at three o'clock that afternoon.

"But promise me, Joe," said the captain's wife, with a smile, "to leave your ventriloquism at home. I would be sorry if by any trick of yours the ceremony should be interrupted."

"Your word is law," replied he, gallantly. "I promise to be as quiet as a mouse."

Punctually at the appointed hour our party found themselves sitting alone in one of the ancient pews near the altar, where they could get a good view of the ceremony about to take place.

The captain entered into a long disquisition about the antiquity of the church, its wonderful architecture, and the many stirring scenes that had taken place within its walls.

The deep notes of the organ announcing the bridal procession, interrupted the instructive discourse.

The solemn procession was headed by the minister who was to officiate, in the robes of his high office; following him was the bridal couple; friends of the two closed up the rear.

The procession halted before the altar. The bride raised her veil and extended her hand to the groom. The minister read the impressive ceremony. He came to that portion where he asked the bride if she would accept the man beside her for her husband.

For a moment the lady hesitated, her eyes glanced through the assembly, they fell upon Joe.

Suddenly she turned deathly pale.

"That face, that face!" exclaimed she, and sank senseless to the ground.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### A STRANGE DISCOVERY.

THE sudden swooning of Madame de Lavigne filled the congregation with consternation. No one could account for it. As for our hero, he was entirely ignorant that it was the sight of his face that had produced so deep an agitation in the mind of the bride.

The marquis, a gentleman of the first water, thought the marriage would have to be postponed, and informed those present of the fact, begging them quietly to depart. Then with the aid of the minister he bore the senseless form of her who was to have been his wife to the sacristy.

Meanwhile the captain and party had returned to their home. The interrupted ceremony was of course the main topic of conversation.

"I'm positive," said Fay, "that the lady swooned as she got a glimpse of Joe's face."

"What is the matter with you, Joe?" exclaimed the captain. "It seems you're bound to create a row wherever you appear."

"I'm sure I don't know," replied our hero. "As she swooned I heard her exclaim, 'that face, that face.' Could she have meant mine? Now, really, Fay, have I such an ugly face that a sight of it is enough to turn a person to stone, like the Gorgon's head of old?"

"If that were so," suggested the captain's wife with a smile, "Fay would have been a pretty hard stone by this time, judging from the number of times her eyes wander towards you."

Before Fay could recover from the confusion into which she was thrown by this silly hit, a servant entered the room, dressed in a magnificent livery.

"Madame," said he, addressing the captain's wife, "I have the honor of bringing you this note from my mistress, Madame de Lavigne."

The lady opened the note and read along as follows:

"KIND FRIEND:—You were at church to-day and saw me swoon. Though feeling quite weak, still I have recovered sufficiently to satisfy a long-lingering wish which has my heart. The cause of my swoon was the sight of a young gentleman of your company. If he is at present with you I bid you, for the love of Heaven, to allow him to follow the

servant who brings this note to you. Let him come immediately, or I shall die of suspense.

"Yours, in love,

"MARIE DE LAVIGNE."

"Strange," muttered Joe; "could it be—"

A wild hope sprang up in his heart.

"But no," sighed he, "it is impossible."

"Joe, you've made a conquest," said Fay, gayly.

"Are you jealous, my dear?" asked he, roguishly.

"Jealous!" replied she—"pshaw! of a lady old enough to be your mother."

"Old enough to be my mother," muttered he—"oh, my heart—down, down like thought; such happiness will ne'er be mine."

Yet he was strangely excited, and in hurried tones bade the servant lead on.

Bidding his friends a hasty farewell he left the house with the servant.

At the door stood an elegant carriage. At the request of the attendant he sat himself therein.

The vehicle was rapidly driven through various streets, and at last halted before an elegant mansion in one of the most fashionable quarters of Paris.

"This way, sir," said the servant, leading our hero up the broad staircase, and to the door of the parlor, "Madame is within."

Joe's heart beat wildly, he scarcely knew why, as he opened the door and entered the room.

The parlor was luxuriously furnished with all that good taste could suggest and wealth purchase.

On a low couch, clad in a rich, yet neat robe de chambre, pale and weak, yet still beautiful, lay Madame de Lavigne. Beside her stood a boy about a year younger than Joe, whose dark features, black curly hair and general resemblance to the lady marked him as her son.

At our hero's entrance the lady slightly arose from her reclining position, and a flush suffused her palid countenance, and extended her hand to him and said in pure English:

"I am glad you came, there, kneel beside me on this ottoman, so that I can gaze into your face."

Joe did as he was directed, feeling all the while a strange tremor at his heart. The low, sweet voice seemed to have touched a chord that thrilled his very soul.

"Madam," said he softly, "if I shut my eyes and hear you speak it comes over me as if I were a little child, and heard my mother's voice."

"Ah," cried the lady, springing up, "does nature awaken within you as in me; do you feel the inspirations that I have experienced since first I beheld your face? Oh, tell me, tell me, what is your name?"

"They call me Joe Dodger, my right name is Joe Thornton."

"My heart has not deceived me," cried the lady, clasping him to her breast; "Joe, Joe, I am thy mother."

The hope in our hero's soul was realized, he was in the embrace of his mother, whom he thought the cruel waves had swallowed.

"Henri," continued Mrs. Thornton, for indeed it was she, "behold this is your elder brother. This is the Joe whom we have thought dead."

The brothers met in a long embrace. For some moments all were too happy to give expression to their emotions by words.

"Ah, Henri," said our hero, at length, "I can't tell you how happy I am to find you and mother still living. They told me that the ship on which you sailed from France had been wrecked and you both were drowned."

"And Joe," said Henri, "they wrote us that you and father had died."

"Who wrote you so," asked Joe.

"Our Uncle Job."

"He is—" began Joe, but he checked himself and continued:

"But first, mother, tell me how it is that you have been so long in France, how comes it that this day you were to become the wife of another? I know of your separation from father and your departure for your native land."

"It is true," said the mother, taking up the record at this point, "that the vessel sustained considerable damage by the gallant efforts of the Marquis de la Rue and Henri were saved."

"We came to Paris. My parents were rich and wealthy. They had offered my mother with your father, who was but a poor American gentleman, and she had received me with open arms."

"At their request I assumed my maiden name—that of Marie de Lavigne."

"As time wore on the hopes of your father and mother faded. I was finally withered and aged by sorrow. They had offered my mother with your father, who was but a poor American gentleman, and she had received me with open arms."

years and your father's name. These things which I thought as true, turned me out of sickness. It was long before I recovered my health.

"Meanwhile the marquis, in a gentle, manly way, sought my hand. My parents earnestly desired me to marry him, but I persisted in my refusal.

"Years passed. My parents died, and I became the sole heiress of their princely fortune.

"The marquis persistently wooed me. He was my benefactor—had saved my life and that of my child. After twelve years of patient waiting, I could not hold out any longer. I consented to become his wife."

"Mother," said Joe, "do you know, that had not the ceremony to-day been interrupted by my fortunate presence, you would have committed a fearful crime?"

"Ah!" said she, turning deathly pale, "what crime?"

"Bigamy!"

"Can it be true? Oh, tell me—your father!—my husband—"

"Is alive!"

"Alive! Oh, where is he?"

"Alas!" said Joe, sadly, "I do not know. But from certain actions of my uncle, I feel assured that father still lives, but is hidden somewhere. But wherever he is, it shall be my mission to discover him."

"And why should your uncle have perpetrated this crime?"

"To possess his wealth. He is a miser, and the only god he worships is gold. For it he would hesitate at no crime."

"Oh, Joe," said his mother, earnestly, "believe me that I always loved, that I still love your father. I thought him dead, and it was a feeling of gratitude, not of love, that induced me to become the wife of the Marquis de Larne. Heaven knows how happy I am in having found you, in knowing that he still lives. I will tell the marquis, he is a noble gentleman, and will immediately resign all claims upon my hand. Joe, we will set out for America together. I will convert all my possessions into money, I am wealthy. We shall explore every nook in the world if necessary. I think we shall find your father. Oh, how blessed I will be if again I will be clasped to his manly arm. What happiness will be ours, if our age will be passed in a restored union, with our children, and Henri, near us."

"I am still weak, mother," said Joe, tenderly, "and must wait until you are fully restored to health, and then we will set out for home."

"But, then, Joe," said his mother, "you must come with me. I cannot bear, now that you have been so long away from me, to be separated from you even for the shortest time."

"But my father, Fay, the poorest, kindest, and truest of men, and Yacup, my faithful friend, and my brother, Henri, near us."

"Yes, I will be happy to see them. They will come immediately."

She touched a bell and ordered the servant who answered the summons, to proceed immediately to the captain's house and bring the whole party along with him.

Half an hour afterward, the captain, his wife, Fay, and Yacup, arrived, and were put in possession of the family home.

The evening was spent in listening to the wonderful adventures through which our hero had passed, and it was late at night when the cheerful party broke up for the night. The captain and his wife started for their home, the rest took up their new quarters in the palatial home of Mrs. Thornton.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### JOE'S RETURN.

As Madame de Lavigne—or rather as we now know her, Mrs. Thornton—had foretold—the marquis, who was to have led her to the altar, immediately and honorably resigned all claims to her hand, upon learning the change in the state of affairs. He remained, however, a true friend of the family, and assisted them in their various preparations for their journey to the New World.

As the day drew near, and Henri, Fay, and Yacup, they went through the streets of Paris, looking at the various objects of interest there.

Henri, who had been revealed to his brother his true name, and he thought he would

show him a donkey, and Henri

was very much interested in the animal.

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way he acknowledged himself as the culprit and explained his *modus operandi*.

It is hardly necessary to state that his mother forgave him, and heartily enjoyed the pranks he subsequently played on others.

Joe took a touching farewell of the elephant, with whose aid he had accomplished the heroic feat already recorded, and the party returned to their home highly delighted with the day's enjoyment, and eagerly expecting the morrow which was to witness their setting out for America.

We will not follow them in their journey from Paris to Havre, but merely state that a few days subsequently they were standing on the deck of one of the magnificent steamers of the French Transatlantic Steamship Company.

The gong sounded, the ship cast off its moorings, and, midst the booming of cannon and the waving of handkerchiefs, majestically steamed out towards the broad Atlantic, on its way to the shore which stretches forth its hospitable arms to the oppressed and enslaved of every land.

The first day out they could not get a glimpse of the captain, as he was too busy in attending to the duties of his position.

But on the second day, as Joe and Fay were standing on the deck conversing with each other, the captain approached them.

A mutual glance of recognition passed between the parties.

"What! Joe Dodger?" cried the captain.

"And you," said Joe, extending his hand, "were the captain of the *Alcanthus* at the time of its conflagration?"

"The same, my boy," exclaimed he, grasping the proffered hand and shaking it heartily. "And Miss Templeton, too," added he, turning to our heroine. "How glad your father will be to learn that you are saved."

"What!" cried Fay, in joyous amazement, "is my father alive?"

"He is," replied the captain. "As for me, I am an old sea-dog. I was picked up by a passing vessel. They pumped the water out of my stomach, and then I was as good as ever. I came to New York, and was surprised a few days after my arrival to behold your father call to see me. He told me in confidence that it was his Indian servant, Lookah, who, in a fit of insanity, to which he was liable, had fired the ship."

"Strange," murmured Joe to himself. "I remember that Lookah told me it was Mr. Templeton who fired the ship while in a somnambulist state."

"He seemed to keep it quiet, as his servant had his head crushed in during the catastrophe; and to-day your father saved his life, said he was an Indian under your father's care."

"It seems that his fellow-citizens gave Mr. Templeton an enthusiastic reception on his return from his many years of service in India, and he was fearful lest his servant's crime should cast a stain upon his high reputation. Under the circumstances I remained quiet, and you are the only persons to whom I have told this."

"I do not like all this secrecy," thought our hero. "There's some mystery in this that needs clearing up."

He did not, however, reveal his thoughts, merely saying:

"That, Fay, Providence rules all for the best. You have mourned your father's loss. Now your tears of grief will be changed to those of joy when you are again clasped to his breast."

"Oh," exclaimed she fervently, "I feel so thankful to Heaven for its mercies. I shall look forward with anticipation to the happy day when I can again behold my father, whom I so dearly love."

The captain was introduced to Mrs. Thornton and Henri by Joe, and all the adventures through which our hero had passed were duly recounted.

"Joe," said the captain one day, "I know you are a ventriloquist. I remember the trick you played on board the *Alcanthus* about those persons being in the boiler. Now would you give an entertainment for the benefit of the passengers?"

Joe assented for a moment, and then replied:

"I will at the moment, to-day; but don't let it out, for that would spoil the fun."

The captain promised not to do so.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### A MYSTERY.

The hour for the principal meal arrived. Our party was in the first cabin, and quite a banquet was spread before the passengers. As all of them understood French, our hero adopted that language as to be appreciated by all.

Among the passengers was a stout hearty old bachelor. He was seated at the table by the side of a thin, bony-looking old maid, and these two Joe regarded as his victims.

"It is very late, Fay," said the old bachelor during the course of the meal.

Immediately Joe, imitating his voice cried out:

"Waiter, bring me a cup of boiling tea."

The waiter hastily executed the order and set the burning hot liquid before the astonished bachelor.

"Eh," cried he, "what's this?"

"You ordered tea, sir," replied the waiter, "and told me to bring it boiling. It's as hot as it could be."

"Hot, stupid fellow," exclaimed the bachelor. "And me roasting. Take that stuff away and bring me some brandy with ice in it."

The waiter took up the rejected tea, and the bachelor was soon absorbed dissecting a fowl.

"Here, waiter," cried Joe, assuming again the bachelor's voice; "never mind the brandy, I guess I'll take the tea, anyway."

"Ah right, sir," said the waiter, again placing the cup before the bachelor.

"Crazy fool!" cried he. "What's the matter with you?"

"You told me to bring back the tea."

"I told you no such thing."

"I heard it, sir."

"You're a fool."

"It may be, sir, but I think it's you that's fooling us."

"Take that for your insolence!" cried the enraged bachelor, seizing the boiling tea, and throwing it at the waiter, who retired highly discomfited.

The table was already in a roar at this episode, which particularly irritated the bachelor.

"No matter, my darling," said Joe, assuming the old maid's voice, which he had previously heard, "when we get married you won't be bothered in this way."

"Madam!" exclaimed the bachelor, putting down his knife and fork, and gazing fiercely at the ancient maiden beside him—"Madam, how dare you address me as your darling, and speak of marriage to me, such an old thing as you are? I would not marry you though you were lined with gold!"

"Sir!" cried that highly virtuous and indignant female, "you are a brute!—a monster! I did not utter a word. But I know you, sir. You take this opportunity before all the people here to ruin my reputation!"

"I call upon everybody," asseverated the bachelor, "to bear me witness that you called me darling."

The highly amused listeners all agreed that the bachelor was right, and that the old maid had given expression to that term.

"Oh," cried she, "I am innocent, but I am doomed."

Joe saw that she was about to faint away, so he hurriedly confessed the trick to those there assembled.

"Saved, saved!" ejaculated the old maid. "My reputation is vindicated."

The old bachelor, however, showed signs of pugnacity, and advancing towards Joe, exclaimed:

"Young man, how dare you play such tricks on me?"

"Take my advice, old fellow," said Joe, so suiting his voice as if it was the old bachelor speaking to himself, "and forgive him."

This new evidence of his skill completely vanquished the indignant man, and he joined in the general merriment.

In such gay sports the time quickly passed, and soon the ship that had borne them safely across the ocean was moored at its dock in New York.

Mrs. Thornton and her family, as she called the four young people, temporarily took up an abode at a fashionable hotel.

So impatient was Fay to meet her father that on the very afternoon of her arrival she set out in company with Joe to find him.

Our hero asked the clerk of the hotel whether he was acquainted with Mr. Templeton.

"Know Mr. Templeton, our ex-consul at Constantinople?" replied the clerk; "I should say I do. Why, sir, don't you know that last week our party have nominated him for governor of the State of New York?"

"I'm delighted to hear of it," said Joe; "he's a good man and deserves the honor. I should like to see him. Can you give me his address?"

"Here it is," said the clerk, copying it out of the directory and handing it to him.

Joe thanked him, and with Fay proceeded to the house, which was an elegant but almost a mansion in one of the most aristocratic quarters of our city.

Together they ascended the broad steps. Fay was waiting with her eyes fixed on the door.

"Oh," murmured she, "I shall see him. How glad he will be to meet me! He has been so kind to me. With what joy he will greet me to his house!"

Our hero rang the door-bell. A servant answered the summons.

"Is Mr. Templeton at home?" asked Joe.

"I do not know," replied the servant. "I will inquire."

"One moment," said our hero, drawing forth a card on which his name was inscribed, and adding that of Fay. "Here, hand him this card."

A moment later the servant returned.

"Well?" asked Fay, eagerly.

"His secretary informs me," said the servant, "that Mr. Templeton left town this morning."

"Ah," sadly exclaimed she, "what a cruel disappointment."

"And when will he return?" asked Joe.

"I do not know," said the servant, abruptly closing the door in their faces.

"Those people are very saucy," said Fay. "Why didn't you tell him who I was? that would soon have changed their demeanor."

Joe said nothing, but descended the steps with Fay and walked to the corner of the street.

"Pardon me, Fay, a minute," said he, leaving her alone.

He walked up to a policeman.

"Do you know Mr. Templeton?" said he.

"I do," replied the guardian of the peace.

"Were you on this beat since morning?"

"Yes."

"Did you see him leave the house as for a journey?"

"I did not. On the contrary, I saw him enter the house not fifteen minutes ago. I've been on this block since that time, and have not seen him go away. He must be in the house at this moment."

"Just as I thought," exclaimed our hero.

He thanked the policeman for his information.

"There's some mystery about this," thought he, "but, by Heaven, I'll get at the bottom of it."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

When Joe and Fay returned to the hotel Joe merely recounted the fact that Mr. Templeton had gone out of town and it was uncertain when he would return.

"I am sorry," said Mrs. Thornton, "for I wanted to go to Yankville to-morrow and did not wish to put Fay to the necessity of the journey."

"Oh, she can remain at the hotel with Yacup," suggested Joe, "while you, Henri and I go to Yankville."

"Have you no objections to that, my dear?" asked Mrs. Thornton.

"Oh, none at all," said she. "I prefer remaining, as our recent voyage has somewhat fatigued me."

"And Yacup," said Joe, turning to his German friend in a tone of mocked severity, "I hand the young lady over to your charge. If a hair of her head is hurt your life is forfeit."

"Supposin' now," asked Yacup, with a grin, "she tears run out mit her comb?"

"That we'll overlook."

"Vell, you shust go. I takes good care von her. Der man vat wants to touch her must shtep over mine dead body."

As he said this he struck a theatrical attitude and flourished his arms wildly.

That point being settled, our hero said:

"Mother, there's a ventriloquist advertised to appear at one of the theaters to-night; as that is in my line, I'm quite curious to see him. Let us all go together."

This was agreed to, and eight o'clock that night found them seated in a box at the place of amusement where the professor, as he was styled in the programme, was to give his performance.

When the curtain rose for the act it revealed a room. In the center were standing two pasteboard figures representing respectively an Irishman and a representative of the fifteenth amendment.

The professor turned out to be the very man whose performances at Yankville had first awakened in our hero the consciousness of the possession of a similar faculty. Joe, therefore, looked upon him somewhat in the light of his master, and was curious to discover whether he, the pupil, had excelled him.

The professor, as he proceeded, made such a display of his work that our hero determined to give him a lesson in the trade.

"I am not a ventriloquist," said the professor. "I am not a ventriloquist. I am the only one in the profession who to present to you the characters of the three types of nations represented by the figures."

"That's true," shouted Joe, making his voice appear to come from the gallery.

The professor was somewhat disconcerted by this interruption, and glanced severely at the glib rascal. He, however, regained his equanimity, and addressing the figure of the Irishman, said:

Went back to work. The car was unstable  
rushed out to change his clothes.

Those remaining indulged in various surmises as to the existence of the mysterious burglars, all wide from the mark, until Joe, under their solemn promise to keep him harmless, revealed his agency in the affair.

It is needless to add that the explanation was received with roars of laughter, in which even the much-abused constable, who subsequently returned, joined.

The next morning the train carried from the village our party, including Job Thornton.

In due time the station for which they were bound was reached, and they alighted.

After a short repast at the inn they entered a vehicle which had been ordered by Joe, and were driven on rapidly along the country road.

Gradually the path became precipitous, the carriage was slowly winding its way along a narrow pass, either side of which was hemmed in by almost perpendicular walls of rock.

Suddenly the path gave a sharp turn and as the carriage wheeled around, a group of six men all masked and with pistols in their hands stopped its further progress.

Some of the assailants sprang on the coachman's box and presented their weapons at the affrighted driver's head. Others flung open the carriage door, and holding their pistols before the surprised occupants, shouted:

"Stir the least and you shall be killed!"

"Oh, good Mr. Highwayman," whined the old man, wringing his hands in apparent terror, "we have no money. Please do not stop us."

The ruffians, however, gagged and bound the whole party, who were indeed at their mercy. Then, snatching Mrs. Thornton and Job from their seats, they dragged them from the carriage and bore them bodily away, leaving our hero and his brother gagged and helpless.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ENTRAPPED IN A LUNATIC ASYLUM.

THE highwaymen, if such they were, dragged their captives some distance along until they reached the end of the narrow pass, where they found a carriage awaiting them.

At this stage of the mysterious proceedings the men who were holding Job Thornton released him. Instead of raising a cry for help or attempting to escape he only said:

"Why didn't you carry off the youngsters with you?"

"There'd be too many," replied one of the assailants.

"Then why didn't you crack open their skulls?"

"It wasn't in our orders," answered the other coolly, as if that was the only reason why the party had abstained from murder.

The feelings with which Mrs. Thornton listened to this conversation can be better imagined than described.

She had been betrayed, torn from her sons, was tightly held in the grasp of villainous ruffians who were bearing her off she knew not whither. And for all this she had to thank the old man. His capture was evidently but a blind to mislead the others. He was in league with her abductors.

As she thought thus the desire for escape became stronger in her mind. With a sudden turn she freed herself from her captors and started to run.

But they closed around her, completely encircling her, all with cocked weapons leveled at her head.

"It's no use, Mrs. Thornton," jeered the wretched old miser; "it's no use. You're in our power, and you must submit quietly or these men will let daylight through your brains."

The captured woman glanced around at the shining weapons pointed at her, then she earnestly gazed into the face of her captors to discover one pitying countenance to befriend her, but in vain; they were brutes rather than human beings, with no instinct but that of dogged submission to the will of their master. Who he was we shall see anon.

Mrs. Thornton saw that her present safety lay in the fact of her making a virtue out of necessity, and leaving it to a kind Providence to endow her sons with the power to rescue her.

"Job Thornton," said she, "I will follow you quietly. I see that it is useless longer to resist you. But rest assured, as there is a heaven above us, my Joe and Henry will yet find a way of snatching their mother from your ruthless grasp, discover the hell wherein you have incarcerated them, and punish you, you old villain, for all your misdeeds."

"I am not, my dear," said the old scoundrel, "but you talk so sensibly. Now won't you step into this carriage?"

"Whither will you take me?"

"That you shall learn when we arrive at our destination."

She entered the carriage, followed by several of her captors. Job, however, not daring to sit near her, clambered up beside the coachman. The latter lashed his horses, and off dashed the carriage at a rapid pace.

The captors had chosen a narrow pass for the scene of their operations, and now when this was passed, the road became broader and less precipitous, until it became an ordinary country highway, stretching along for miles beside fields of corn and wheat and other cereals, just ready for the mower.

At any other time, the beautiful landscape, the clear blue sky, the merry warbling of the feathered songsters clustering amid the branches of the mighty oaks that lined the roadway—all the beauties of nature, so profusely displayed, would have awakened the admiration of Mrs. Thornton. But now her thoughts were too busy speculating upon the fate of her two sons, and whether they were already hastening after her to rescue her, to enable her to survey the beautiful country through which they passed.

The carriage rapidly rolled along mile after mile. Day waned, and night was about to set in, when at last the vehicle drove up before a large stone mansion and stopped.

It was a solitary, solemn-looking edifice, built on the summit of a slight elevation. The height of the site afforded a view for miles around, and nowhere was a building, not even a cottage, in sight. The truth was that the land for miles around belonged to the proprietor of the mansion, and for some reason he was careful not to sell any, or by any other means allow human habitations to arise to any proximity to his building.

The edifice was about five stories high, and each story had a large number of long and narrow windows, each of which was secured by cross-bars. The mansion proper was inclosed by a wall of masonry, which formed a court-yard between the building and the wall.

This wall, which was about ten feet high, was surmounted by sharp glistening prongs, and had but a single gate, and that was heavily secured within.

As the carriage rolled up the deep-mouthed baying of a pair of blood-hounds was heard from within.

A bolt was withdrawn, a bar displaced, a huge key turned, and the gate was opened a small distance.

At the same time Job Thornton descended from the driver's box, and opened the carriage door.

The ruffians within forced Mrs. Thornton to alight, and they followed.

"What place is this?" asked she.

"You shall find that out in due time," replied the miser.

Job passed through the gate first, then Mrs. Thornton was pushed through; the others succeeded.

The gate was closed, the huge key turned, the bar replaced, the bolt re-inserted, and our hero's mother was within the walls of a very hell on earth.

She was, however, unconscious of the nature of the place into which she had been entrapped, and without deigning to inquire, silently followed her captors through the empty court-yard and to the main entrance of the building itself.

Here again a number of bolts and bars had to be unfastened before the door was opened. In fact, security and strength seemed to be the main characteristics of the establishment.

The party was ushered through a hall-way into a small, but neatly-furnished office. At a desk sat a gentleman who, however, arose at their entrance.

He was a stout, well-built middle-aged man, with a large head, high forehead, and calm blue eyes.

He seemed to be the mildest-mannered man that ever lived; and yet beneath that calm exterior he concealed the brutality of a savage, the cunning of a fox, and the merciless cruelty of a tiger.

As the party entered, the attendants departed, leaving Job Thornton and Mrs. Thornton alone with the portly gentleman above described.

"Good-evening, Doctor Trueheart," said the old miser, motioning Mrs. Thornton to a seat. "This is the lady of whom I spoke to you."

"Ah, good-evening, madam," said the doctor, gently pressing her hand. "And you are the wife of one of my patients?"

"Ah!" cried she, starting up. "Is my husband in this place? Is this the lunatic asylum where he has been imprisoned for the last thirteen years?"

"It is."

"And I may see him?"

"Alas, madam!" replied the doctor, in a tone of deep sorrow, "you may see his corpse; his spirit has fled. He died this morning."

"Dead!" gasped she; "dead! No, no, it cannot be! He could not have survived so many years of torture only to perish now. Oh, it is a trick—a device! Tell me that he is enchained in the deepest dungeon below the ground; tell me that in despair he is hoping, praying for death; but assure me that he still lives."

"Madam," answered the lying scoundrel, with hypocritical sympathy, "it were cruel to deceive you. Your husband is indeed dead."

"Oh, my heart, my heart!" wailed she, sinking senseless to the floor.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE LONG-LOST HUSBAND.

DOCTOR TRUEHEART carried the insensible form of Mrs. Thornton to the sofa, and stretching her out upon it returned to his desk.

"We can leave her," said he, drawing forth a memorandum book, "while we attend to business."

"But she may revive," suggested the miser.

"Oh, no, her swoon's good enough for half an hour at least. Thirteen years ago, Job Thornton I received from your hands a patient alleged to have been of unsound mind, but who really was no more insane than you or I am. He was your brother, and though you had no scruples against taking his fortune, still you hesitated about taking his life. You promised me one thousand a year during his incarceration at this place, and five thousand if he died a natural death."

"And haven't I kept my promise faithfully?" asked the old wretch.

"You have, and I have tried to earn the five thousand without resorting to the more efficacious means that lay in my power. What is the result? The old man is alive to-day. If he has survived thirteen years of this life, who knows now many years longer he will hold out. I told you all the while to let me have my own way about it. It would have been so much the safer."

"But he was my brother."

"Pshaw, man," sneered the doctor, "did you think of the relationship when you put him into my power, and stole his wealth, amounting to over one hundred thousand dollars?"

"'Twas false," cried the miser, "it was not—"

"Bah," interrupted the other. "Do not try to pull the wool over my eyes. I have my spies abroad, whose duty it is to keep me informed of everything concerning those who bring us patients. See, I have it all down in this little book. Amount taken from your brother, one hundred thousand, expenses fifteen thousand, clear profit, eighty-five thousand."

"Well, sir," whined the miser, "since you know all I will confess that I did profit that amount by that act."

"That's another lie," coolly said the doctor; "you invested this stolen money to such advantage that you are worth at least a quarter of a million dollars. And now this wife turns up, the husband lives. You'll have a deal of trouble to come out ahead this time."

"Aye, doctor," hissed he, "and that's not the worst. They've got two brats, and one of them, Joe, he's the very devil himself."

"They're only boys," said the doctor, calmly, as if discussing an ordinary business transaction, "and if the old ones were forever hushed up—"

"Do you mean that it is necessary they should be killed?" gasped the miser.

"Hush, friend," said the doctor, with a smile, "you call things by too harsh a name. It is true, here we are safe, but suppose some one should overhear us? Why don't you say translate them to a happier sphere?"

"And you will do it?" eagerly asked the old scoundrel.

"I will for fifty thousand dollars, cash down."

"Fifty thousand dollars!" exclaimed the miser, horror-struck at the amount.

"Oh, that's cheap as dirt," said the other, as coolly as though he was arguing the price of a hat or other commodity. "It's only twenty-five apiece, and I'll guarantee you that you shall not be suspected."

"But I haven't that sum with me."

"How much have you?"

"A thousand."

"Well, hand that over. I'll settle the woman first, then you pay me twenty-four thousand dollars when the old man's fixed."

In a slow, regretful way the old miser handed over to the deep-dyed villain the amount, which the latter quietly pocketed.

"Now," said he, "by the setting of to-morrow's sun, Mrs. Thornton will be an angel in



expected, and his surprise was increased by seeing the old miser alight from the vehicle and approaching him.

"Why, my dear sir," said he, "I thought you were gone."

"The woman," whispered Joe, admirably assuming his uncle's voice, "has a valuable paper that I must get hold of."

"Oh," replied the doctor, "I would have found it on her body and sent it to you."

"She has not the paper with her," replied Joe, suppressing a shudder at hearing his mother's fate so coolly hinted at. "She's got it secreted. I must see her. I will get the secret out of her."

"But you've missed the train," said the doctor, leading the way into the asylum.

"When does the next train leave?"

"To-morrow."

"Then I will remain here until to-morrow."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### JOE AND HENRY FIND THEIR PARENTS.

Mrs. THORNTON lay in the corner of a foul and loathsome subterranean cell. She was not manacled, for the grated opening in the wall, and the heavily barred iron door, afforded her no opportunity to escape.

She was very unhappy, and scalding tears flowed from her eyes as she wrung her hands and exclaimed:

"Lost, forever lost. To see him again after so many years of separation, only to be torn from his arms and imprisoned in this foul den. And the brutes struck him down, perhaps killed him, before my very eyes. Oh, God, where are Thy thunderbolts? Why sleeps Thy wrath? Can suffering innocence sink into dust before triumphant villainy, and Thou not wreak Thy vengeance on these human fiends! Oh! what will become of him, my husband, my long lost love; where are my children, my boys? What will become of me? Oh sorrow insupportable, oh grief immeasurable! My heart, my heart—canst thou endure these pangs and yet not break?"

Thus she raved, and wept, and tore her hair. She filled the cell with her groans and cries, she pounded and shook the iron gate which barred her egress, until the sound re-echoed through the dim and murky gallery, confirming all who heard it in the thought that she was a raving maniac.

Her cries were momentarily hushed at the sound of approaching footsteps.

"Ah! they come to butcher me," shrieked she, springing from her recumbent position on the floor and standing at bay.

Dr. Trueheart now approached the gate of her cell, followed by Joe, disguised as his uncle and Henry, in the coachman's dress. Under the pretense that violence might have to be resorted to, our hero managed to keep his brother near him.

At sight of him whom she thought to be the author of all her woes she bitterly exclaimed:

"Job Thornton, can you come to look upon the evil you have done; to mock and jeer me because I thought you had some spark of honor left in you yet, and trusted myself in your power. Soon your vile schemes will be crowned with success. Soon I shall be dead, but, mark my words, as sure as there's a heaven above us my spirit, unable to find repose, will haunt you day and night, and hiss into your ears: 'Murderer! Murderer!'"

"You see, doctor," said Joe, assuming his uncle's whine, "she's mad, stark mad. Poor thing, how I pity her."

"Fiend!" shrieked Mrs. Thornton, "keep your tongue to yourself; I want none of it."

"I'm afraid, Mr. Thornton," said the doctor, "that it will be dangerous to enter her cell now. She's desperate, and a woman in that condition is worse than a tiger. You'll never find out from her where the paper is."

"What paper?" asked Mrs. Thornton.

"I will," hissed Joe, "if I have to choke each word out of her throat. The coachman will assist me, will you not?"

Henry only bowed; he dared not trust himself to speak.

"Have you the keys, doctor?" asked Joe.

"There they are," replied he, handing them to

A slight tremor of joy shot through our hero's frame as he received the instruments of his mother's escape in his hands.

"You are trembling," said the doctor.

"Only the dampness," whined Joe. "Doctor, what I want to say is a secret which even you must not know. You will leave us together, doctor, won't you? I won't set her free, eh, doctor. You can depend on me for that."

"I should think so," answered the proprietor,

with a chuckle. "You'd be the last person in the world to do so."

"If you only knew," mentally exclaimed our hero.

"You want the coachman?" asked the doctor.

"Yes; he can stand off a little, so as not to hear our conversation, but be within call when desired."

"All right. I have business otherwheres to attend to, and must now leave you."

Joe waited until the last echo of the departing proprietor's tread had died away; then, hastily unlocking the iron gate, he entered the cell with Henry.

He approached his mother, but she, raising her hands, cried:

"Back, Job Thornton, back, or with these fingers I'll strangle you as I would a dog."

"Mother," cried our hero, throwing off his rig, and stretching out his arms, "do you not know me?"

At the sound of his voice a glad light broke over his mother's countenance; she rushed into his embrace, and, wildly kissing him, exclaimed:

"Joe, my Joe! Heaven be praised!"

The tender embrace lasted for some moments, during which neither of them spoke, for rapture.

Then his mother, gently disengaging herself from his arms, anxiously asked:

"And where is Henry?"

"I am here, mother," exclaimed her second-born, throwing off the coachman's cloak.

"Oh, my child—both my children," cried Mrs. Thornton, embracing Henry; "oh, how happy I am."

Joe allowed his mother a few minutes to recover her self-possession, and then he told her of the stratagem he had employed to gain an entrance into the asylum, and added:

"Be of good cheer, mother. Your sons are near you, and they shall find the means to rescue you this very night."

"And not only me, Joe," said his mother, with a glad light beaming from her eyes, "but your father also."

"My father!" exclaimed Joe.

"Our father!" cried Henry.

"Yes; he is imprisoned in this place. I saw him—I was clasped into his arms, though only for a moment."

She related to them the scene that had taken place in the proprietor's office.

"Poor father," exclaimed Joe, "how cruelly he has been treated; but his trials will soon be over, lasting joy, like the beauteous sun, will disperse the clouds of sorrow and grief that now envelop him."

"Hush!" whispered Henry, "the proprietor is returning."

In an instant the boys had resumed their disguises, and when the proprietor approached the cell he found Mrs. Thornton crouching on the ground wringing her hands in agony and the pseudo-uncle sneering at her.

"Good-night, madam," said Joe, tauntingly.

"I've wrung from you the information I desired; and now I present dreams to you, for you'll never have another chance to dream again. He! he!"

Laughing and sneering, he came out of the cell, followed by his brother.

He handed the keys to the doctor, who locked and barred the iron gate.

"Doctor," said Joe, in his uncle's voice, "the paper I told you of contains a description of treasure buried by my brother. I've found out where the paper is, but I must know more about the treasure. That only my brother can tell me. I must see him. Conduct me to him."

"He is very violent," said the doctor; "I doubt whether you will be successful."

"I can at least try," replied Joe. "I'll take the coachman along. If he offers violence we two are a match for him."

"I'll conduct you there," said the proprietor, "but cannot remain with you, as this is my office hour, and I must be in my office."

As this was exactly what our hero desired, he took good care to conceal his delight, and even went so far as to urge the proprietor to remain with him.

"Impossible," said he; "I'll conduct you there, and hand you the keys. Be very careful to lock the door when you come out, and be sure that you bring me the keys, as they unlock all the cells in which the patients are confined."

"Lead on," said Joe.

The proprietor led them through the gallery, then raising a broad stone which was placed in the flooring he revealed a trap and spiral staircase which led down into the darkness.

Taking the torch and descending the boys began to descend, followed by the boys.

"You take good care he shall not escape," said Joe as they were descending.

"His cell is thirty feet below the ground," explained the proprietor, "and was expressly made for such refractory patients as he is. Until yesterday he was confined in the cell where his wife now is, but he actually wrenched off the iron bars and escaped. We clubbed him down and brought him down here, where nothing on earth could rescue him."

"Perhaps you'll think differently after a while," thought our hero.

They arrived at the bottom of the staircase.

They found themselves in a vault, the atmosphere of which was heavy and murky, giving the light of the torch a pale, ghastly hue, they themselves could scarcely breathe.

The stone flooring was covered with a greenish slime, and here and there little pools of stagnant water oozed out from between the cracks in the stones.

"He, he," cackled Joe, "a fine place this is. Say, doctor, how long can a man live down here?"

"Well, I should say he might manage to survive forty-eight hours."

"And how long is your patient here?"

"Well, more than twenty-four."

"He'll be gone to-morrow?"

"I hope so."

So did our hero, but in a different way than the proprietor.

One corner of the vault was grated.

This was the cell where Mr. Thornton was confined.

The proprietor flashed the torch through the bars and the boys dimly beheld an old gray-haired man lying on the ground.

He did not turn his head towards the light.

He seemed unconscious of their presence.

"I'll leave you with him," said the proprietor, handing the torch to Henry. "I'll leave the trap open for you to come out."

For full five minutes the boys stood contemplating the old man in tremulous silence.

Then Joe stretched forth his arms between the grating and, in a voice choking with emotion, exclaimed:

"Father!"

## CHAPTER XXX.

### OUR HERO UNFOLDS A PLAN OF ESCAPE.

At the sound of the single word, so dear to a parent's heart, the old man started from his semi-unconscious state and muttered:

"Am I mad, or did I indeed hear a word for whose utterance my heart has craved and my soul hungered for so many years? Ah, no," added he, sinking on the cold, slimy floor of his cell, without having observed our hero and his brother. "Years of cruelty and torture, how many I can no longer remember, have at last completed their dire mission. Oh, how I have feared this day, how, when, beneath their fiendish inhumanities, my brain, like a giddy traveler, was reeling and tottering on the brink of insanity, I have pressed my forehead with my hands and cried aloud, 'Stay, stay, fleeing reason, I will not be mad, I will not be mad.'"

He let his head sink on his breast and remained in mournful silence. Tears flowed down the cheeks of his listening sons at hearing their father's recital of the horrors he had endured.

They could not speak; deep emotion bound their lips and fettered their limbs.

"Yesterday," continued their father, in a low, mournful tone, "I thought I heard my wife's voice; it seemed to me as if with a giant's strength I tore the bars that confined me asunder and rushed to her arms, clasped her to my breast. Ah, it was but a hallucination of my distorted mind. It was the first outbreak of that madness I had feared so long. And now, methinks I hear my son's voice call upon me. Alas, I had two sons, and they are dead. Oh, Heaven have mercy upon me, I am mad, I am mad."

He buried his face in his hands and relapsed into an abstraction of utter despair.

Silently and stealthily Joe unlocked the gate of the dungeon and entered the cell with his brother.

Until they advanced until they stood before their father.

The old man lowered his hands and beheld them.

"Ah, demon," cried he, thinking his wicked sons had returned from the land of the living to rob him of health, home, happiness, the light of reason, and all that makes life happy and blessed, I have strength enough still left to slay you, monster."

He sprang to his feet and came toward them wildly.

"Father," cried Henry, "what would you do? Would you murder your son, your first-born?"

"My son!" gasped the old man, staggering back.

"Yes, father!" exclaimed our hero, "I am Joe, your son, him whom you loved to call Joe Dodger, and this is Henry, my brother, whom you thought was sleeping at the bottom of the ocean."

Whilst uttering these words, our hero had divested himself of his disguise, and Henry had done the same.

Mr. Thornton heard the words in stupefied silence. He saw them throw off their disguise, and uttered not a word.

They extended their arms, yet he drew them not to his bosom.

He staggered and reeled as if intoxicated. A wild gleam shot from his eyes, and he shook his fist at them.

"Avaunt, ye phantoms," yelled he, "my sons are dead. Ye are not flesh, ye are spirits come to haunt my mind. Down, down, to hades, I say."

He struck our hero a blow on the head and recoiled as suddenly as if he had been shot.

"My poor father," murmured Joe, "are his senses really deserting him?"

"I struck him," gasped Mr. Thornton, "I thought to strike but empty air, but it was a body—a living body. Oh, reason, pause but for a moment. Let me feel them again."

With trembling fingers he first touched Joe, and then Henry.

He ran his hand over their heads, their faces, their very bodies.

"Alive!" shrieked he, "they are alive. Oh, I am not dreaming, I see them with my eyes, I hear them with my ears, I hear the sound of their voices, I touch them with my hands. They are my sons, they are my children!"

He rushed to Joe and rapturously kissed him, then he caught up Henry, and raising him in his arms, held him to his breast as if he were a child.

For some moments he could not bear to part from their embraces, but kept kissing and hugging them in childish glee, his tears of joy now fast rolling down his wrinkled face.

"If I am not mad," said he at length, "if these, my sons, are alive, then, surely, it was indeed my wife I clasped to my bosom. Oh, boys, tell me if you know, does your mother live?"

"She does indeed," replied Joe, "and is this moment confined in a cell in this horrid place."

"But it seems so strange," continued his father. "They told me that she and Henry had been drowned."

"It is a long story, father," said Joe, "but let us sit down on the stones, side by side, and I will tell you all."

The three sat on the slimy floor; for the time being they were unconscious of the fetid, noisome place in which they were. The father sat between them, holding the hands of either son with nervous grasp, as if he feared they would be snatched from him.

Our hero began, and in a short and simple way related all the incidents with which our readers are already acquainted. His father listened attentively, interrupting him now and then with some exclamation of indignation at the author of all their woes.

"My children," said he, when Joe had concluded. "In the eventful character of all our lives may be seen the guiding hand of an overruling Providence, who has watched over and protected us all. Surely the dark night of our misfortune is rapidly fading before the bright sun of happiness already beginning to rise upon us. From our past lives I draw faith that we shall escape from this pest-hole of civilized life. We shall be free, united and happy."

"That is our mission," said Henry.

"And we shall accomplish it," said our hero.

"But how can we?" said his father, sadly.

"But I," interrupted Joe, "have the keys, not only to unlock her cell, but that of every prisoner here confined."

"That is something," continued the old man, "but even so, we are still within the power of the bad man who governs this place. The inmates are either imbecile idiots and lunatics, or such men, who, by a long course of cruel treatment, have become cowardly and demoralized. On the other hand, the proprietor has around him a horde of ruffians who would hesitate at no deed of violence or bloodshed."

"Those men," said Joe, "can be gained over. I do not believe in the saying that there is honor among thieves, nor is there any either among villains. The only ties that bind these ruffians to their masters are dread and money. I have in my possession bank-notes to the amount of ten thousand dollars. They are ready to be paid out for any purpose."

because we thought we might have occasion to need them. Bribe these men, and convince them that their only chance to avoid the just punishment of their misdeeds lies in aiding us, and they will turn upon their master, whom, I am sure, they hate as much as they fear, and rend him limb from limb."

"Hush," whispered Henry, "here comes some one down the staircase."

It was an attendant, who, seeing that the trap was open, descended in order to discover if the prisoner was safe. The boys hid themselves in a corner of the cell, and the attendant, astonished at finding the iron gate opened, entered the dungeon.

Hardly had he put his foot within the cell, when the boys sprang upon him, and our hero, leveling a pistol at his head, exclaimed:

"Breathe but a word and you die."

"Why, what's this mean?" stammered the surprised man.

"It means just this," continued Joe, "that we're going to rescue this man and some other inmates of this asylum. We are desperate and heavily armed. If you attempt to resist we will blow your brains out. If you aid us we will guarantee you immunity from punishment and five hundred dollars. Take your choice."

"Say, young feller," whispered the keeper, "will old Trueheart know of this?"

"He will not," replied Joe, "until he finds himself helpless to interfere."

"Then I'm with yez," said the man. "I hate him, because he clubbed me, and I swore if I ever got the chance to be revenged on him. I'll help yez. I swear it, by Heaven, and so will all the others, if yer divide a couple of thousand among them."

"Can we depend on you?" asked Mr. Thornton.

"You can," replied the man, earnestly; "I'll not betray yez."

"Listen," said Joe, "I'll go with you to all your companions. I'll try to win them over. If I notice the slightest suspicious sign about you, I'll shoot you down. I've got my pistol loaded and cocked. Remember that. If I win them all over I will unlock all the cells. At a signal all the inmates will rush out. You must all join us so that the proprietor will be alone. Do you promise me this?"

"I do."

"Henry," continued our hero, "you remain with father until I return."

"Joe," said his father, as our hero and the keeper were about to ascend the staircase, "among the inmates you will find a poor half-witted old man, who was brought here about a year ago. I desire above all that he shall be let out unharmed."

"What sort of a man is he?" asked Joe.

"The keeper knows him," replied his father.

"Poor fellow, a portion of his skull was depressed by some accident. If under good medical treatment that portion were slightly raised, I am sure he would recover his reason again."

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE MISER'S DOOM.

As might have been foreseen by the boys, the bonds with which they bound the miser and the coachman, being formed of their jackets, were not of a very durable nature.

The coachman, who was a strong burly fellow, after a deal of twisting and turning, managed to rend them asunder, and thus free his hands and legs. He then removed the gag from his mouth and uttered a shout.

This the miser answered with a low moan, and, directed by the sound, the coachman soon came up to him and set him at liberty.

"Those cursed boys!" exclaimed the old rascal, struggling to his feet; "they've got the best of me!"

"What was their motive," asked the coachman, in "putting on our clothes?"

"No doubt to return to the asylum and hoodwink the proprietor," whined the miser.

They had now advanced into the road.

"Ah!" exclaimed the coachman, "the devils have run off with the carriage!"

"They're in the asylum by this time," said Job.

"The only thing we can do is to trudge right back and inform the proprietor."

"What a plight we are in!" said the coachman, pointing at his companion and bursting into a laugh.

They were indeed dressed in the boys' pants, and presented a ludicrous appearance.

"Let's stand there, however, until they get us out of here as fast as we can."

They walked the long way back to the asylum. It took them several hours to accomplish the distance, and, at last, entered the proprietor's

office just as he returned from conducting Joe to his father's cell.

If ever there was an astonished man in the world, that man was Dr. Trueheart.

He could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses.

He was sure he had just conducted the miser and coachman to the subterranean dungeon, and here they were standing before him in a very sorry plight indeed.

"Oh, doctor," whined the old reprobate, "we have been betrayed, we are lost."

"What does it all mean?" asked he, confusedly. "I thought I just brought you to your brother's cell?"

"Ha," cried Job, "you did?"

"Yes; why do you start?"

"Because he whom you thought was I, was my nephew, the son of my brother."

"The deuce you say!" ejaculated the doctor.

"Yes," continued the other, "and the coachman was his other son, the brother of that devil Joe, who seems born to spoil all my schemes."

"But I do not understand all this. They both wore your clothes, respectively, and now I see you are wearing theirs."

"Yes. The rascals surprised us and forced us to change."

"What! two boys? Could you not master them?"

"No; that Joe's got a spirit called ventriloquism, to help him in all his tricks."

The miser in whining tones related how our hero had outwitted him and the coachman.

"That is the game, is it?" cried the proprietor, his small eyes twinkling with rage. "Well, I guess I can spoil it."

He touched a bell and an attendant entered.

"Proceed immediately," said he, "to the trap that leads to the underground cell. You'll find it open. Close it, and report to me."

The man, however, did not move.

"William," cried the doctor, springing up, "did you hear me?"

The man began to tremble.

He was evidently afraid of the doctor's wrath, yet hesitated to obey.

"What are you standing there trembling for?" yelled the proprietor, pulling forth a pistol and aiming it at his head. "Speak, or I'll blow your brains out!"

The man's courage forsook him, he sank on his knees, exclaiming:

"Don't kill me, doctor, don't kill me, and I'll tell you all."

"All what?"

"Two boys what got into the place in disguise have bribed the keepers and unlocked all the cells of the inmates. They're all waiting for the signal to rush upon you and kill you."

"By Jove!" yelled the proprietor, pale with fury. "I'll give them the signal myself; I've been prepared for an event like this. In every cell is a train of powder; metallic wires connect the charges with the electric battery on yonder shelf. I can so arrange the machinery that in fifteen minutes a spark will be emitted which will run along the wires, simultaneously explode all the charges, and send the whole building in the air. Ah, ah! The time has come to put my infernal machine into operation."

He uttered a fiendish laugh, and approaching the battery, carefully poured the various acids into the jars. Then he took up the ends of the copper wires and put them into a curiously-arranged machine, which was run by clock-work.

"You see," said he, explaining the *modus operandi* with all the complacency of an inventor, "this clock-work gradually brings the ends of the wires closer together. When they arrive within half an inch of each other, the spark will fly between them, and at the same instant the whole asylum will be shattered into atoms. Meanwhile we can escape, leaving the fools waiting for the signal. Oh, they'll get it, in a way they do not think of!"

"He, he!" giggled the miser. "It'll serve them right! It'll serve them right!"

The coachman and attendant were too horrified at the diabolical scheme to utter a word.

"Come, gentlemen," cried the doctor, "let's get out of here as fast as we can."

They opened the door, but hardly had they stepped into the hall-way when they were met by the keepers, headed by Henry, Joe, and Mr. Thornton.

In an instant the doctor and the miser were bound and gagged, and then the door was very

and which Mr. Thornton had just left.

Joe fired off the pistol.

It was the signal.

Simultaneously all the inmates rushed out of the cells and into the asylum yard.

Among them was Mrs. Thornton, and the man with the depressed skull.

Meanwhile the keepers had unbarred the gate which led out of the building.

"For Heaven's sake!" cried the attendant, who was in the proprietor's office, "hurry out of this place!"

"Why?" asked Joe.

"In a few minutes the place will be blown into the air!"

"Impossible!"

The attendant hurriedly explained the infernal machine which was in operation.

"Can it be prevented?" exclaimed Joe.

"No, no," cried the attendant, "it is too late! Oh, let us flee before we are all killed."

Already most of the inmates had rushed out. Joe and Henry, followed by his parents, and the rest that were within the building, hurried out.

They had just gained the woods when a report like the discharge of a hundred cannon was heard. The air was darkened by a shower of rocks and stones, which fortunately fell harmless around them.

A cloud of smoke and dust for some moments enveloped the scene.

When it had disappeared, nothing was visible of the asylum but a mass of dust and ruins.

Among the fragments of broken stones were seen the torn and mangled remains of Dr. Trueheart, the inhuman proprietor of what had been a curse on the face of the earth, and Job Thornton, the mean, rascally miser.

Both had met their richly deserved fate.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### A GRAND DISCOVERY.

We must go back to the hotel where we left Fay and Yacup.

They spent the time during which the rest were absent from the city in taking walks through the town and viewing the various objects of interest that struck their fancy.

Still the time wore heavily on their hands, and as day after day passed without the return of the others, or without receiving any tidings from them they became anxious and concerned.

Fay especially feared that some mischance had befallen Joe, and became quite sad at the thought.

To cheer her spirits, Yacup proposed that they should take a drive to Central Park.

Fay acceded to this, more to please her friend than for any pleasure she might experience with-out Joe at her side.

A carriage was ordered, and the young pair gayly dressed, were soon being rapidly driven to that beautiful park which is the joy and pride of all our citizens.

The afternoon was bright and the weather lovely.

The park was thronged with ladies and gentlemen, who were the embodiment of the wealth, fashion, and beauty of the metropolis.

Yet, among all none appeared so charmingly beautiful, none so gracefully blended the sweet simplicity of girlhood with the unfolding charms of hidden womanhood, as our heroine, Fay Templeton, then sweet sixteen.

The vehicle in which they were was an open barouche, and as the noble steeds pranced along many people stopped to gaze in admiration at the beautiful girl.

A closely-covered carriage passed by them.

Its occupant, a gentleman, observed the girl, and a slight exclamation escaped his lips.

He pulled the check string and called his coachman's attention to the barouche.

"Follow it," ordered he, sinking back into his seat.

Then began a chase, all unconscious to Fay and Yacup, through the park and back again to the terrace.

Here Yacup ordered the coachman to make a halt while he and Fay alighted to obtain some refreshments.

Hardly had they disappeared in the direction of the terrace, when the occupant of the coach, who had followed them also alighted, and going to the driver of the barouche handed him a note.

"Give this to the young girl when she returns," said he, at the same time slipping a gold piece into the driver's hand.

"I will, sir," said the coachman, pocketing the coin, "I will deliver it on her."

Then the mysterious man returned to his coach.

Half an hour later Fay and Yacup came back to the terrace.

"Please, ma'am," said the coachman to Fay, after she and Yacup had taken their seats within the vehicle, "there is a gentleman that begged me to give you this note."

Fay took the missive and eagerly opened it and read:

"MY DARLING FAY—MY OWN DEAR DAUGHTER:—If you ever want to see your father, order your driver to follow my vehicle. I am driving to my home, and there I will receive you. There are reasons why I cannot show myself to you now, and clasp you to my bosom, as I long to do. Follow me, darling; all will be explained."

"Your loving father,

"ALVAH TEMPLETON."

"Vell," asked Yacup, "vrom who isht dot led-der, if I may ask?"

"From my father, Yacup," replied she, eagerly—"oh, I shall see, speak to him; he will tell me all—why he has not seen me before—oh, read it!"

Yacup read the letter through, and then said:

"Vell, vat you goin' to do mit it?"

"Why obey, of course," said she.

"I don'd like all dis secrets about it," said Yacup, shaking his head.

"Father has reasons for it," she answered; "but he will tell me all."

"Vell," said he, as if to satisfy the doubts of his mind, "I'll be near you, anyhow, and no harm shall cum by you as long as I am here, by tam. If you gets hurt, Joe he would eat mine head off."

"I hope," replied she, laughingly, "that the emergency will not arise."

"Coachman," asked Yacup, "who vas dot man vot gives you dot note?"

"He is sitting in that carriage there, sir," answered the coachman, pointing to the vehicle.

"Vell, you shust follow dot carriage."

"All right," said the driver, closing the door and ascending to the box.

The other vehicle set itself into motion and drove rapidly out of the park, followed by the barouche. On through the various streets it drove, until at last it halted before the elegant mansion which, in a previous chapter, our hero and Fay had ineffectually attempted to enter.

Though Fay was on the alert to catch a glimpse of her father as he descended from the coach, yet he was so muffled in a mantle, and entered the house so quickly, that she could not distinguish his form or features.

In obedience to Yacup's orders, the barouche drove up beside the other vehicle, and he and Fay alighted and ascended the broad staircase. Before they had time to ring the bell, the door was opened by a servant, who led them into a parlor furnished to a degree of surpassing luxury and elegance.

"My master desires," said the servant, "that the young gentleman should remain in the parlor while he speaks to the young lady."

Yacup received this piece of information with ill-concealed displeasure, but Fay thought it was but natural that her father should wish that their reunion should take place while they were alone.

"Who is your master?" asked Yacup, abruptly.

"Colonel Templeton," replied the servant.

"Vell," said he, whisperingly, to Fay, "you go, und ven you vants me shust scream like blazes, und I cums right purty quick, you bet."

"Lead on," said Fay to the servant.

The latter conducted her up one flight of stairs and to the door of the library, where he left her alone.

The door was slightly ajar, and with her heart beating strangely and a tremor shaking her limbs, Fay slowly entered the room.

One glance at its occupant was sufficient.

She recoiled in horror, and, turning deathly pale, gasped:

"You are not my father!"

"I know it, Fay," replied he, grasping her by the wrist, "and it was for that reason I summoned you here to-day. I am Lookah, his Indian servant."

"Oh, my poor father," sobbed Fay, "oh, where is he?"

Lookah carefully locked the door, and then turning to her, said:

"He is alive, but in my power. Do not shrink from me, Fay, for I will not harm you. Listen, while I reveal to you the motives for my act. I loved your mother, Fay, with a passion deep and unutterable. Then I was a rajah, a prince. My kingdom contained thousands of acres of land. I ruled over thousands of slaves. Though your mother, however, scorned my love, and instigated her father to declare war upon me. He was mightier than I was, and conquered my territory, and from a rajah I became a slave. Well, let that pass. When your mother married Colonel Templeton, I was transferred with her dowry to his household. Though I hated him, yet the love I bore your mother was so strong that for her sake I buried my revenge while she lived. After her death my hate, intensified by its suppression, burst forth anew, and I longed for the opportunity of revenge. It came. On our passage to this

country I fired the ship and turned suspicion on his head. I thought that they would hang him for arson, but during the conflagration he was struck by a mast and rendered partially idiotic. Then the plan came into my head to change our respective positions. I, then slave, became the master, he became the slave. The greater portion of his wealth I managed to secure from the wreck. I impersonated him. His long absence from the country and the darkness of his complexion, rendered more so by his long residence in India, favored the deception. Upon my arrival in this country I was treated with the greatest honor. I was invited to banquets and festivals by the highest in the land. My culture and education enabled me to act well my part. No one suspected that I was other than I appeared to be. Ah, ah, they honored me, Lookah, the servant, the slave, while they profoundly pitied Colonel Templeton, the poor half-witted fool."

"Oh, wicked, heartless man!" ejaculated Fay.

"The first dread of exposure," continued he, not noticing her interruption, "came at the time when you and Joe came here to seek your father. Had you been alone, or with him who now accompanied you, I would have admitted you then and revealed this to you. But somehow I fear that Joe, I dread to meet him. Now I have told you all. For your own safety and that of your father it will be necessary for you to act towards me as if I were your father."

"What I can never do," interrupted she, vehemently.

"Girl," hissed he, "you must. My word can doom your father to a miserable death. If you would not have him die, if you would live in hope, perhaps, at some future day to see him, you must implicitly do my bidding."

"Oh!" cried she, "what would you have me do?"

"Live here. Allow me to introduce you as my daughter. Speak to me in accents of filial love. You will here be surrounded by wealth and luxury; and, if my ambition is fulfilled, you will grace a still higher sphere."

He was interrupted by a knock at the door. He unlocked and opened it and a servant entered.

"Well?" asked he.

"The committee have arrived."

"Send them here," ordered he.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### CONCLUSION.

AFTER the servant had departed on his errand, Lookah turned to Fay and hissed into her ear:

"Now I will introduce you to these gentlemen as my daughter. One look to betray me and you die."

He took a small jeweled dagger from his breast, and threatening her with it restored it to its place.

The poor girl, pale with fear, nodded an assent to his words.

The servant now returned, ushering three portly gentlemen into the room. Lookah received them with a courtesy that did credit to his training, and which was one of the means by which he deceived those around him into a belief that he was really the ex-United States Consul.

"Gentlemen," he said, affably, "to what fortunate circumstance do I owe the honor of this visit?"

"Colonel Templeton," replied the chairman of the committee, "we have come to bring you the pleasing intelligence that our party has nominated you for the position of Governor of the State of New York, and we have been deputed to inform you of the fact, and urge you to accept the high honor conferred upon you by the unanimous vote of the convention."

"Mr. Chairman and gentlemen," responded the false colonel; "in accepting the nomination so kindly and unanimously tendered to me, I will not at this time express my heartfelt thanks to you individually. At some more fitting time I will have the honor to respond to those whom I regard as my benefactors. Gentlemen, it is not I saying that such matters never come singly, but I am sorry to leave the fact that also comes to pass. This day, I trust, has given me a signal notice of that. You have all heard the melancholy story of the disaster which occurred to the ship on which I was on the way home to my native land. You all know that I incurred the loss of a dear daughter, who, I thought, had perished in that terrible catastrophe. This day my tears of sorrow were changed to tears of joy. I seek whom I believed as dead was restored to me. Indeed, gentlemen, my daughter stands before you. And now I turn to you to Miss Fay Templeton."

The massive monument for our heroine had arrived. Should she be silent, and suffer this cruel

deceit to continue? Should she, by her acquiescence, give it the stamp of truth? Surely the gentlemen before her were men of honor. If they could but imagine who the man was on whom they were heaping these unmerited honors—honors that were intended for her father—they would recoil from the wretch with horror. She saw that Lookah was narrowly watching her; but she determined, come what may, once and for all, to expose the fraud and deceit.

"He lies!" cried she, suddenly. "I am not his daughter!"

"Ha!" exclaimed Lookah, drawing forth the dagger, and twirling it around as if carelessly playing with it. "Pardon me, gentlemen; the shock of the catastrophe has somewhat affected her reason. She is indeed my daughter."

The honorable gentlemen forming the committee gazed at the pair in mute astonishment.

Somewhat emboldened, Fay rushed towards them, and placing them as a shield before her, cried:

"I am not mad—I speak the truth."

"No more, girl, no more," hissed the servant.

By this time the suspicions of the committee were aroused, and the chairman, pointing at the weapon, said:

"Surely, colonel, you would not draw your dagger on your own daughter?"

Feeling sure of friends, Fay rapidly continued:

"He is not Colonel Templeton; he is not my father, but my father's servant. He is an Indian slave."

Lookah would hear no more. With the cry of a baffled tiger he sprang upon Fay, and would have buried the dagger in her heart, had not the gentlemen forming the committee sprang upon him and wrenched it from his grasp. At the same moment the sound of many footsteps ascending the stair was heard, the next, and the door was violently flung open, and there rushed into the room Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, Colonel Templeton, Joe, Henry and Yacup.

Fay was the first to perceive her father, and rushing up to him sank into his arms, exclaiming:

"Father, dear father!"

Some gleam of reason seemed to return to the imbecile man as he embraced his daughter, for tears rushed from his eyes and he softly murmured:

"Fay, my own dear Fay."

Meanwhile a couple of officers, who had entered simultaneously with the rest, clasped a pair of handcuffs on Lookah's wrists while he stood spellbound with astonishment at the sight of his master, whom he thought safely secured in the lunatic asylum.

A number of explanations followed, and the committee were exceedingly grateful that the fraud practiced upon them was so early discovered.

Lookah was dispatched off to jail, where he remained until he was in due time tried and convicted of arson on the high sea, and sentenced to imprisonment for life.

Colonel Templeton took up the residence occupied heretofore in his name and stead by his servant, and, at Fay's earnest request, Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, with Joe, Henry and Yacup, also remained in the spacious residence.

The colonel was placed under the best medical treatment the country could afford, and in a few months completely regained the control of his mind.

It was a happy day indeed when he was fully restored to health, both in mind and body.

The miserable hovel occupied by the old miser was torn down, Mr. Thornton regained possession of the wealth of which he had been robbed, together with the increase due to the miser's thrift, and Mary, the housekeeper, who had so tenderly reared our hero, was made happy by a position in Colonel Templeton's household, which was the common home of all.

What need I add further, except to say that as years passed by and our hero arrived at man's estate, he came to know his own heart, and discovered that it was brimful of love for Fay, who had meanwhile grown into a most beautiful lady.

A declaration and mutual confession of love followed.

The happy day was set, and a grander and more magnificent wedding was never yet celebrated than that when Joe, the boy ventriloquist no longer, led Fay to the altar.

[THE END.]

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